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First Published 1947

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Printed by J. D. Desai, at Rashtra Vaibhav Press,
273, Vitthalbhai Patel Road, Girgaon, Bombay



NAWAB MURTAZA ALI KHAN
Great-great-grandson of Nawab
Munir-ud-Dowlah, Author

Dedicated to the Revered Memory
of my Father

Nawab Ahmad Quli Khan Bahadur

HEAD OF THE BHICKNAPAHARI NAWAB FAMILY
OF
PATNA



NAWAB AHMED QULI KHAN BAHADUR
Head of the Bhicknapaharī family Great-grandson of
Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah

FOREWORD

BY

REV. FATHER H. HERAS

Professor of History, St. Xavier's College, Bombay

The present monograph is the more welcome, as it refers to a period of Indian History which, though having an extraordinary number of sources in many archives, public and private, is very little studied. All know the history of India from Babar to Aurangzeb, but after the death of the latter not even the names of his successors are known to many of our lovers of History. And yet the history of the disruption of the Mughal Empire has perhaps more attraction than that of its foundation.

Many causes had led the descendents of Babar to the pitiful plight in which they found themselves in the late eighteenth century—Muhammad Shah after Nadir Shah's sack of Delhi; or Alamgir II in front of Ahmad Shah Durrani, or finally Shah Alam when a fugitive in Bihar, kings without a throne, who could not strike coins without permission from foreign invaders. The internal gangrene of a highly cultured and sensual court had been helped by attacks from the outside, both Indians and foreigners: Marathas, Sikhs, English and Afghans.

Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah was a prominent person at the Mughal Court during this very period. Himself a foreigner, he had not arrived at the Mughal capital attached to a foreign army, not even in search of adventures and fortune, as so many foreigners did during those days. Munir-ud-Dowlah arrived at Delhi as an ambassador of the Persian Court. When his sovereign Nadir Shah was assassinated, the Mughal Emperor kept Munir-ud-Dowlah at the Court as his servant and since

that day he became the loyal friend and adviser of the three successors of Muhammad Shah.

This is the story related by the Nawabzada Muttaz Ali Khan, who reveals himself in these pages a keen and faithful chronicler and devoted great-great-grandson of that great diplomat and politician, the founder of the Bhicknapahar Nawab family of Patna.

APPRECIATED

BY

Late Dr Sir Syed Ross Masud (Kt.) M.A., Ph.D. (Oxon),
Bar-at-Law, Director of Public Instruction to H. E. H.
Nizam's Govt., Vice-chancellor, Muslim University, Education
Minister to H.H. Bhopal Govt

" I have read each and every word of your MS of the life of Munir-ud-Dowlah. What a pathetic picture it represents of the last days of the once Mughal Empire. As a historical record of that painful period your book—a real contribution to eighteenth and nineteenth century Indian history—will be of great interest to all students of Indian history. "

MUNIR-UD-DOWLAH—HIS LIFE AND TIMES

Nawabzada Murtaza Ali Khan has not only written a memoir of a great personality and of a family of traditions and achievements, but has also thrown considerable side-light on a phase of Indian History at once picturesque and obscure.

There are great gaps in the available histories of India, and one of the most conspicuous is the decline and fall of the Mughal Empire. No doubt, in the fulness of time, when an objective and comprehensive history of India comes to be written, such neglect and omissions will be rectified and accounted for.

The Nawabzada has broken fresh ground—both from the personal and historical points of view—and his monograph has distinct interest and value.

(Sd.) Syed Hussain
formerly Professor of Indian Civilization
University of Southern California
U. S. A.

PREFACE

It was one of the cherished ambitions of my life to write a biography of my ancestor, Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah. It has been a stupendous task and I admit that I have not been able to do full justice to a work which required an abler pen—the pen of a Froude or a Sarkar to accomplish it creditably; but I have tried to do my best with the materials at my disposal, and have also tried to place before the readers the various phases of the Nawab's life and activities in India of those days—the middle span of the eighteenth century - when the lamp of the Mughal rule had all but been extinguished. The picture is a very incomplete one no doubt, but one would be able to discern in the ugly lines of intrigue and treachery on the face of Hindusthan, from Bengal to the Punjab, the handiwork of the Nobles and Adventurers of that period and the pass to which they had brought India. Munir-ud-Dowlah, whose ancestors had made history in Iran, arrived in India at a period when the Mughal Power was going headlong towards destruction; the cancer of treachery and disruption had already taken a firm grip of the Body Politic: Bengal, Oudh, Doab, the Punjab and the Deccan had all become separated from the Throne and owed allegiance to it but in name. In fact, the whole Kingdom was in the hands of usurpers and traitors. To overcome all the antagonistic forces and converge them again into the fallen Centre was not a task for one man. Munir-ud-Dowlah made a heroic effort in that direction but he had tremendous odds against him. He failed, but a glory is attached to his failure also; because, possessing the power which he wielded and the facilities that he possessed during the reigns of Emperors Ahmed Shah Alamgir II and Shah Alam II, he did not soil his hands with anything that can be remotely connected with selfishness or sordid ambition, but ever remained honest in the one purpose of his life—the restoration of Mughal Power in India.

It is presumed that a man of the Nawab's ability and foresight must have prepared an Yaddasht (Diary) of his career for his own use and had that been available, more light could have been thrown on his life; but unfortunately shortly after his death his Khawja-Sara (Major-domo)¹ Daulat-Aizun, who was his confidante and in charge of all his affairs, becoming disappointed with the treatment meted out to him by Nawab Shuja Muhammad Khan-e-Zaman Khan Munir-ud-Dowlah II Nadir Jung (the Nawab's eldest son), decamped with a considerable amount of jewels and valuable papers and could not be traced in spite of the vigilance of the officers of the East India Company and Shuja-ud-Dowlah; and thus the records which would have been of great help in writing this life were lost for ever. As it is, no proper light can be thrown on his early life in Iran and very little is known of his activities during the early days of his stay in India also, excepting his successful Embassy to Ahmed Shah Abdali on behalf of Emperor Alangir II in 1756, which saved Delhi from another sack; till the year 1759 when he accompanied Prince Imperial Ali Gowhar, afterwards Shah Alam II, in his march to Patna (Bihar). The Nawab's Muraqqa (painting) which was in our possession till lately could not be included in this book as it was dishonestly made away with by a Patna artist to whom it was given for enlargement.

The work is by no means exhaustive, but I have made an effort with the resources at my disposal to bring out as concise a life of Munir-ud-Dowlah as possible. Lives of great men always serve as a beacon light for others, and in writing this book my aim has been to compile a permanent record of the Nawab's life for the guidance of the Nawab's descendants and others; and if it ever served as a guide and a beacon light to any one, I would deem myself amply rewarded for this labour of love and devotion.

1. Calendar of Persian Correspondence (Government of India Publication) Vol. V, letters 1621-2.

In conclusion, I must thank my numerous friends for helping me in various ways in the compilation of this book; particularly Rev. Father Heras of the St. Xavier's College, Bombay, for writing the Foreword, Sir Jadunath Sircar for guiding me to some historical works in the Bengal Royal Asiatic Society, Dr Sir Ross Masud and Dr Syed Husain for going through the MS and writing appreciations, the librarians at the Royal Asiatic Society, Bengal and Oriental Library, Patna, for giving me facilities, Nawabzada A. F. M. Abdul Ali for supplying me with copies of documents during his incumbency as the Imperial Record Keeper, my cousin Khan Bahadur Mahammad Ahsan Quli for supplying me with the photo of Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah's tomb, taken by the late Sir Courteny Ferrel, Chief Justice of Patna and Mr Ziauddin Ahmed for correcting some of the proofs and helping me in other ways.

M. A. K.

CHAPTER I

FAMILY AND ANCESTORS

Riza Quli Khan Khorasani, known in Indian History as Nawab Munir-ul-Mulk, Munir-ud-Dowlah, Riza Quli Khan Bahadur Nadir Jung, Iranian Ambassador to the Court of Emperor Muhammad Shah II — 1735-1747, Minister to Emperor Ahmed Shah — 1748-1754, Minister to Emperor Alamgir II — 1754-1759, Chief Minister to Emperor Shah Alam II — 1760-1771, and Governor of Kora and Allahabad— 1771-1773, hailed from the province of Khorasan (Iran), having been born in the city of Naishapur about the year 1695. His father, Hajee Karim Khan, was the Chief of the Ustajlu¹ Clan of the Turks, and as such was attached to the Court of Shah Tahmasp II, Shah of Iran. Riza Quli Khan died at Benares in November 1773, having just relinquished the Governorship of Kora and Allahabad, which he held at the behest of Emperor Shah Alam II. By race and descent he belonged to the Qara Qunilu Clan of the Turks, being a descendant of Qara Yusuf, King of Tabriz and Azarbaijan, who claimed his descent through Ghaus-ul-Mutakhirin Syed Muhammad Nur Bakhsh and Shaikh-ul-Islam Sultan Zhinda-peel-Ahmad-jam to² Hazrat Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on them).

Three names stand out in prominence amongst the ancestors of Riza Quli Khan in the history of the Iranian Empire. The first is³ Shaikh-ul-Islam Sultan Zhinda-peel-

1. After the loss of their Kingdom to Safavids, the ancestors of Riza Quli Khan held the Chiefships of the Turkish Clans and it was usual for the Safavi Kings who ruled Iran with the help of the Turks whom they called Qizil-Bashes, to have Turkish nobles attached to their Courts.
2. Family Tree.
3. See *Tazkirat-ul-Kiram*, Lucknow, p. 435.

Ahmed-jam, a very renowned Sufi, who took to ascetic life at an early age and spent eighteen years in Sufistic exercises and devotion in mountain retreats. He was a disciple of Sultan Abu Saeed Abulkhair. He was a great writer on religion and Sufism, the best known amongst his works being *Siraj-us-Saireen*. He flourished during the reign of Sultan Sanjar, Emperor of Iran.

The second is Qara Yusuf⁴, who founded for himself a kingdom in Tabriz and Azarbaijan, but had to lead a chequered life due to the conquering onslaughts of Amir Taimur. At one time he had to fly the country and take refuge with Sultan Bayazid of Turkey.

When Taimur invaded Turkey, the Sultan sued for peace. Taimur made the surrender of Qara Yusuf as one of the conditions, but Sultan Bayazid refused to make over Qara Yusuf⁵ to Taimur, with the result that he was attacked, defeated and taken prisoner. Qara Yusuf, as a prisoner, was sent to the prison camp in Egypt. He, however, escaped after the death of Taimur and making a dexterous journey through Palestine and Iraq, reached Tabriz and regained his throne, ruling over it for a considerable period. Qara Yusuf, however, died suddenly while marching at the head of an army of a hundred thousand soldiers against Shah-Rookh Mirza, son of Amir Taimur. One of his sons⁶, Jahan

4. See revised translation of John Malcolm's, *History of Persia* by Shaikh Muhammed Ispahani, Bombay, Vol. I, Chap. 13, p. 223, and *Alam Arai Abbasi* by Sikander Beg Turcoman, Teheran, Vol. I, p. 197.

5. Harold Lamp in his *Tamerlane*, pp. 209—210, quotes the following reply of Sultan Bayazid to Taimur on the demand of the surrender of Qara Yusuf: "Know, O bloody dog named Taimur, that the Turks are not accustomed to refuse shelter to friends and to shun battle with foes or to resort to lies and tricks of intrigue."

6. Ibid, Vol. I, Chap. 13, pp. 223 & 232. Also see *Alam Arai Abbasi* by Sikander Beg Turcoman, Teheran, Vol. I, 199 and Browne's *History of Persian Literature*, Vol. I, p. 241.

Shah, founded an empire after his death which extended from Iraq to the limits of the Caspian Sea. This empire was eventually lost to Safavids. A daughter of Qara Yusuf, named Gauhar Shad Agha, after his death, was married to Shah-Rookh Mirza (son of Amir Taimur). She built a mosque at Meshed, adjoining the Mausoleum of Imam Riza (the 8th Imam), which is still extant and is called the Mosque of Gauhar Shad.

The third is Murshid Quli Khan⁷, Chief of the Ustajlu Clan of the Turks, a premier nobleman and Governor of Khorasan in the reign of Muhammad Shah Safavi, who eventually became the regent of Abbas Mirza, subsequently Shah Abbas, the Great. Sir John Malcolm in his *History of Persia*, Sir George Shirley in his *Abbas the Great*, and Sikander Beg Turcoman in his *Alam Arai Abbasi* record that Murshid Quli Khan, the Chief of the Ustajlu Clan, as the Governor of Khorasan and one of the premier noblemen, was the guardian of Abbas Mirza, co-jointly with Ali Quli Khan, the Chief of the Shamlus. These two powerful nobles, however, fell out with each other, the quarrel resulted in an open rupture and both the nobles took to the field. Ali Quli Khan, who was accompanied by young Abbas, was worsted. The horse of Abbas was shot under him and he himself ran considerable risk, but the victors, stopping the pursuit, threw themselves at his feet and thus Murshid Quli Khan became the sole guardian of Abbas Mirza. After suppressing rebellions in different parts of the country, Murshid Quli Khan took Abbas to Qazwin (the then capital of Iran) and seating him on the throne, proclaimed him King, and himself became the Vakil-e-Mutlaq (Sole Administrator). Murshid Quli Khan was, however, treacherously assassinated by some of the men of the Shamlu Clan, it is presumed, at the connivance of Shah Abbas, who had become jealous of his power and popularity.

7. *Alam Arai Abbasi* by Sikander Beg Turcoman, Teheran, Vol. 1, p. 262.

CHAPTER II

EMBASSY TO TURKEY AND INDIA

Riza Quli Khan, like his father, was also attached to the Safavid Court and held a position of honour and trust-inasmuch as he was sent to the Court of Sultan¹ Mahmud V of Turkey on an embassy by Nadir, (Shah Tahmasp II was at this time King in name only as Nadir ruled the country), at the time when the Turkish army had invaded the Northern Frontiers of Iran. His mission was to persuade the Sultan to order the evacuation of Azarbaijan by the Turkish army. He was also charged with a letter of congratulation by Shah Tahmasp II to Sultan Mahmud V on his ascending the throne of Turkey. Before the results of this embassy could be known, Shah Tahmasp foolishly attacked the Turkish army and Riza Quli Khan was recalled. Afterwards Nadir sent him to India on an embassy to the Court of Muhammad Shah, Emperor of India, in order to draw the attention of the Emperor to the machinations of the Afghans who, having been expelled from Iran, had taken refuge in India and were plotting against the integrity of the Iranian Empire.

Riza Quli Khan² reached India in 1735 and stayed for about two years. Muhammad Shah, having been ill-advised by his Ministers did not pay any heed to the repeated demands made by the Iranian Government through their Ambassador Riza Quli Khan for the punishment of the Afghan refugees, with the result that he was recalled by Nadir, whom he joined in Kandhar and marched with him back to India in

1. See Persian translation of John Malcolm's *History of Persia* revised by Shaikh Muhammad Ispahani, Bombay, Vol. 2, Chap. 17, p. 28.
2. Persian Translation of Malcolm's *History of Persia*, p. 36. *Seyer-ul-Mutakhirin*, English Translation, Vol. 1, p. 301.

1737. The history of Nadir's invasion is too well known to require any elaborate mention, excepting some episodes wherein Riza Quli Khan prominently figures.

Mirza Mansha, in his *Maktoobat*³, mentions the fact of Riza Quli Khan taking Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk as prisoner when the latter was attacking Nadir's army. So also Ghulam Husain Khan in his *Seyér-ul-Mutakhirin* mentions that after the death of Samsam-ud-Dowlah in the field of battle, "Saadat Khan who was still in the field of battle with some of his men that had escaped the slaughter and had formed themselves into a body and were trying to protect him as the Qizil-Bashes were making a general attack, one of them who was a young Turk from Naishapur, and of course, a townsman of Saadat Khan's, having forced his passage stood intrepidly before him, whilst the latter was shooting arrows with his bow, and having recollected his features, cried out to him : 'Muhammad Amin ! Against whom art thou fighting ? And on what soldiers dost thou reckon ? Art thou gone mad ?' Saying this, he fixed his spear in the ground, alighted, and making his horse fast to it, he got hold of one of the elephant's ropes, and mounted into the howdah where he presented his poniard to the other's throat. Saadat Khan who knew the custom of Iran, made a sign of submission, and surrendering to the man, was seized as prisoner by the claws of destiny and carried to Nadir Shah." Nadir showed him every courtesy and consideration. Saadat Khan started peace negotiations from Nadir's camp, and they would have succeeded but for the rivalry among the nobles in the Court of Muhammad Shah, with the result that Nadir marched to Delhi. It appears that Riza Quli Khan also took some part in these negotiations, inasmuch as in one of his letters to George Verelst⁴, Governor of Bengal, he casually

3. Persian Manuscript, private collection.

4. Calendar of Persian Correspondence (Govt. of India pub.) Vol. 2, letter 251.

mentions that "but for his adversaries neglecting the proffered terms of friendship, Nadir Shah would not have invaded Delhi."

The third episode relates to the sack of Delhi by the order of Nadir Shah. Family tradition has it that Riza Quli Khan played a very important part in persuading that enraged monarch in ordering the stoppage of the Delhi massacre. It is related that he appeared before Nadir with the tail of his Ammama (head-gear) wrapped round his neck (sign of mourning). On seeing him thus, Nadir queried: "Riza Quli, what dost thou want?", to which he replied: "Aman (protection) from God for the creatures of God." Nadir looked at him for a couple of seconds and said: "We grant." And thus the massacre was stopped. Although other historians have not recorded this fact, Henry George Keene in his *The Turks in India*⁵ mentions that the massacre was stopped "on supplication of his [Nadir's] own minister", which is enough to establish the truth of the family tradition referred to above.

5. Henry George Keene's *The Turks in India*, p. 215.

CHAPTER III

CAREER IN INDIA

After the departure of Nadir Shah, Riza Quli Khan remained at the Mughal Court at Delhi, presumably as a representative of the Iranian Government, in which capacity he continued till the assassination of Nadir Shah in 1747. Thereafter, he became attached to the Court, in what capacity it is not known, on the recommendation of Vazir Qamruddin Khan, the Prime Minister of Muhammad Shah, a fellow countryman of his. After the death of Muhammad Shah in 1748, he entered the service of Ahmed Shah as a Minister and rendered conspicuous services to the Emperor during his reign in carrying out negotiations on his behalf with Ahmad Shah Abdali, the Afghan King. After the death of Ahmad Shah in 1754, he became Minister to Alamgir II, who conferred on him the title of Munir-ud-Dowlah Bahadur Nadir Jung and bestowed on him a *Khil'at* of 17 *parchas* with jewels, a sword, a horse and an elephant. He served that Emperor most loyally and faithfully till Alamgir II asked him to accompany the heir-apparent, Prince Imperial Ali Gowhar, to Bihar in 1759. In support of the above facts a passage from the letter of Shah Alam¹ to George Verelst (Governor of Bengal) is quoted wherein he says : "Ever since we were Shahzada (heir-apparent), Munir-ud-Dowlah has attended us and also demonstrated much allegiance to our Royal father and has served former Kings." The introductory note to Volume II of the Calendar of the Persian Correspondence (Vol. III, p. xvii) also mentions : "Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah, a nobleman who had grown old in the service of Shah Alam's father, now enjoyed the confidence of his son."

1. C. P. C. Vol. II, letter 950.

Whilst Minister to Alamgir II, he successfully carried out another embassy to Ahmad Shah Abdali when the latter had crossed the Indus for the fourth time in 1756 to avenge himself on the Emperor for the capture of Lahore by Ghaziuddin Khan and was determined to sack Delhi, but as a result of Munir-ud-Dowla's intervention on behalf of the Emperor (Munir-ud-Dowla was well known to him as Abdali was a lieutenant in Nadir's Army), his anger was appeased and he entered Delhi peacefully. Munir-ud-Dowla in one of his letters² to George Verelst mentions the above fact and says that he (Munir-ud-Dowla) "*acquitted* himself so well as to have acquired great honour."

2. C. P. C. Vol. II, letter No. 251, and *Tarikh-i Muzaffari* by Muhammad Ali Khan Ansari (Persian manuscripts, Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library, Bankipore), p. 318-A.

CHAPTER IV

ACCOMPANIES PRINCE ALI GOWHAR TO BIHAR

The downfall of the Mughal Empire may be said to have begun after the death of Aurangzebe due to the fratricidal wars. But the invasion by Nadir Shah and subsequent invasions by Ahmad Shah Abdali, the rising power of the Marathas, the treachery of Umaras (Nobles) and lastly, the intrigues of the English, virtually destroyed the solidarity of the Mughal Empire once for all. The Imperial Court of Delhi at the time of Muhammad Shah, Ahmad Shah and Alamgir II, had become a toy in the hands of adventurers and selfish noblemen, who played with it for their own ends. In the words of Keene¹ "the dominions of Akbar and Aurangzebe had now fallen into a pitiable state. Although the whole of the Peninsula still nominally owned sway of the Moghuls, no province remained in the occupation of the Government, besides part of the Doab and a few districts of the Sutlej. Gujarat was overrun by the Marathas, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa were occupied by the successor of Ali Verdi Khan, Oudh and Allahabad by Safdarjung, Central Doab by the Afghan tribe of Bungash. The Punjab had been virtually abandoned, the rest of India had been recovered by the Hindus with the exception of such portions of the Deccan as still formed the arena for the family wars of the sons of old Nizam " Alamgir II was virtually a prisoner in the hands of Ghaziuddin Khan (the eldest son of Chin Qulich Khan, Nizam-ul-Mulk) who had usurped to himself the position of Vizarat from the time of Ahmad Shah. Being disgusted with this unscrupulous and treacherous Vazir, Alamgir, taking advantage of his absence from the Court and in despair

1. *Rise and fall of the Moghul Empire* by H. G. Keene, P. 35.

prevailed upon his son, the Prince Imperial Ali Gowhar, nominally to go and manage his jagir of Bihar but in reality to sally out and gather friends and allies in order to gain power and rescue both his father and the Empire from the hands of his faithless Minister. To quote Keene again: "When in 1759 the heir to what was left of the Empire of Hindustan had gallantly cut his way through the myrmidons sent against him by the ruthless Minister, [Ghaziuddin having returned to Court persuaded the Prince to return to Delhi from Jhajjar and had him surrounded by his men in the house which he was occupying outside the Fort,] he crossed the Jumna and took refuge with Najib-ud-Dowlah, but finding him rather indifferent, he came to Lucknow and met Shuja-ud-Dowlah. Shuja-ud-Dowlah was particularly unwilling to throw himself irredeemably into the cause of a ruined Sovereign's fugitive heir. Foiled in his application to the Viceory of Oudh, the Shah-Zada turned to the member of the same family who held the Fort and District of Allahabad and was named Muhammad Quli Khan. To this officer he exhibited an Imperial Patent in his own name for the Lieutenantancy of Bihar, Bengal and Orissa which was then the theatre of wars between the British traders of Calcutta and the family of the usurping Viceory of these Subhas." However, having secured a Sanad from his father for the Subedari of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, Prince Ali Gowhar sallied out of Delhi to attempt the conquest of the Eastern Provinces which would supply him with men and money. According to *Sayer-ul-Mutakhirin*³ "six noblemen were selected by the Emperor Alamgir II to accompany the heir-apparent" and one of them was "Munir-ud-dowlah⁴ Riza Quli Khan Bahadur Nadir Jung". After leaving Delhi he

2. *Rise and Fall of the Moghul Empire* by H. G. Keene, pp. 64 & 65.

3. *Sayer-ul-Mutakhirin*, Vol. II, p. 44 (English Translation)

4. *The Shah Alam Nama*, p. 28, (By Ghulam Ali Khan. MS. Bengal Asiatic Society).

Ibrat Nama, Vol. I, pp. 83 & 87 (By Maulvi Khairuddin Muhammad. MS, Bengal Asiatic Society).

proceeded to Jhajjhar where he left Munir-ud-Dowlah in order to collect an army and arrange other matters, and himself proceeded towards Oudh.

Reaching Lucknow, he met Shuja-ud-Dowlah and Muhammad Quli Khan, the Governor of Allahabad, also Raja Balwant Singh of Benares and other neighbouring petty chiefs. He could persuade them to help him to conquer the Eastern Provinces and finding himself at the head of 40,000 more or less zealous followers, he was able to cross the Karmnassa in the early part of 1759, and to invade Patna, where Munir-ud-Dowlah also joined him. But Ghaziuddin in the name of the Emperor had already sent orders⁵ to his satrap Mir Ja'afar, the Nazim of Bengal, to oppose the Prince and, if possible, to apprehend him and send him a prisoner to Delhi. But notwithstanding that, the Nazim was ready to buy peace with this formidable league and would have done so but for the intervention of Clive, at this time the Governor of Fort William in Bengal. The English in their own interest could not but oppose the Prince, because they were bound to secure the Gaddi to the Nazim who was their creature and prevent it from falling into stronger hands lest the results of the Battle of Plassey should be undone. At first Raja Ram Narayan, the Naib of Patna, was ready to make peace⁶ with the Prince and hand over⁷ Bihar to the heir-apparent inasmuch as,

5. Introductory Notes to Volume I of the Calendar of Persian Correspondence. Also Vol. III, p. vii and Vol. I, letters 124 and 125.
6. *Sayer ul-Mutakhirin*, Vol II, p. 124 (English translation).
7. *Shah Alam Nama*, p. 28, (By Ghulam Ali Khan. MS. Bengal Asiatic Society).
- „ *Muzaffer Nama*, pp. 139-B & 140-A (By Karam Ali. MS. Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library, Bankipore).
- „ *History of Bihar & Orissa*, p. 307 (By Syed Aulad Haider Fouq Bilgrami - Urdu).
- „ *Tarikh-e-Ali*, p. 102-A (By Muhammad Saleh Qudrat. MS. Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library, Bankipore).
- „ *Ahwal-e-Salat*, p. 194-B (Anonymous MS. Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library, Bankipore).

on the advice of Munir-ud-Dowlah and Muhammad Quli Khan he visited the Shahzada on the Navroze-Day and offered the customary Nazar. But as soon as he returned from the camp; he was prevailed upon by the officials of the Company stationed in Patna under orders from Clive to give battle, and with the help of British soldiers successfully resisted the attack on the Patna Fort. As ill luck would have it, Muhammad Quli Khan, the main helper of the expedition, left the Prince at this moment having been won over by Lord Clive "in the usual way".⁸ Thereafter, deserted by Muhammad Quli Khan, and worsted in repeated encounters with the Nazim's army, the Prince became exhausted and returned to Benares on the advice of Munir-ud-Dowlah and through him started negotiations with the English. The English promised a great deal but nothing of consequence was realized through those negotiations excepting that Clive⁹ sent a Peshkash of 500 gold mohurs to the Prince as a token of loyalty. From Benares, he again returned to Patna on the advice of his generals Low and Kamgar Khan in order to take Bihar. It was there that he received the news of the foul murder of his father, Emperor Alamgir II, through the treachery of the wicked Ghaziuddin, on November 10th, 1759. On the advice of Munir-ud-Dowlah, The Prince proclaimed himself Emperor, taking the title of Shah Alam II, and honoured Munir-ud-Dowlah with the title of Munir-ul-Mulk (Light of the Empire) and a Khil'at of 27 parchas with Surpech, jewels, sword, a horse and an elephant.

The English became again perturbed at this second venture of the Prince to take Bihar, now when he was the Emperor. They could hardly afford to lose Bihar as, in that case, their whole scheme in Bengal would have been ruined. After the most surprising results of the Battle of Plassey, the

8. Introductory Notes to Vol. I, Calendar of Persian Correspondence. Also. Vol. III, p. vii.

9. Minutes of the Select Committee, dated 30th May 1759.

Company had begun to play the part more of a conqueror than of peaceful merchants. With success, ambition had come, which was too often tainted with treachery and bad faith. The treacherous Mir Ja'afar who occupied the Nizamat of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa at the behest of his masters, the English, very soon found that he could not satisfy the servants of the Company unless he yielded to each and every exorbitant demand as it was put forward. After making good the lavish promises that he had made to the Company and their chief servants, his treasury had become absolutely empty. Bengal was in a state of bankruptcy and anarchy was not far. The invasion of Bihar by the Prince had exposed the utter helplessness of the Nazim and it had showed how completely he depended upon the English to defend his territories from outside attacks. For this small help that they had rendered, the Company had demanded from Mir Ja'afar¹⁰ the grant of the Foudari of Sylhet and Islamabad, which the Nazim had to refuse, with the result that relations between him and the Company became very much strained. Another ambitious young man in Bengal, Qasim Ali Khan, the son-in-law of Mir Ja'afar, had been watching the developments. He approached Vansittart¹¹, the then Governor of Fort William, privately, and there he struck a shameful bargain on his own account by promising to cede the three districts of Burdwan, Midnapur and Chittagong to the Company if his father-in-law could be removed from the Masnud and he appointed in his place. This temptation proved too much for the Company and in October 1760 the old ally of Plassey was deposed by the Council and a new friend installed in his place. It was at this time that Prince Ali Gowhar, now Emperor Shah Alam, had again.

10. Calendar of Persian Correspondence, Vol. 1, letter 456.

11. Ibid. Introductory Notes to Vols. I & III, and letter 443. See also R. Muir's *The Making of British India* London (1915) doc. 12, p. 59.

invested Patna; but before he could muster adequate forces. Major Carnac, on behalf of the Company took the offensive and defeated both his generals Low and Kamgar Khan. Disappointed again, Shah Alam returned to Benares from where he sent¹² Munir-ud-Dowla on an embassy to Ahmad Shah Abdali, the King of Afghanistan.

The embassy of Munir-ud-Dowla to Ahmad Shah Abdali coincided with the invitations already sent by Najib-ud-Dowla, and other Princes of Hindusthan to the Afghan King. The rapid progress of the Marathas had terrified the Muslim Princes and they feared that if the progress of the Marathas and the strength which they were gaining day by day was not checked, they would establish an Empire of their own in the very heart of Hindusthan, and would make the Mughal and other Muslim Chiefs their vassals, if not their slaves. Ahmad Shah Abdali had already responded to this urgent call of the Nobles of Hindusthan, and accordingly, setting out from Kandhar, he crossed the river Attock where he met Munir-ud-Dowla¹³ in the beginning of the year 1173 of the Hijra (A. D. 1760). For two months the great armies representing the two rival religions lay opposite each other engaging in skirmishes, the principal of which was the Battle of Badely, in which nearly 70,000 Marathas were slain (in the Second Jamadi 1173 of the Hijra) in A. D. 1760. Again early in 1761 a pitched battle was fought (Thursday, the 6th of the Second Jamadi 1174 of the Hijra) on the field of Panipat where 80,000 Marathas were destroyed. During

Battle of Panipat.

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12. *Sayer-ul-Mutakhirin* by Ghulam Husain Khan, Vol. II, p. 130. (English Translation) *Shah Alam Nama*, by Ghulam Ali Khan, p. 25, [MS. Bengal Asiatic Society].
 - *Bahr ul-Mawwaj* by Muhammad Ali Khan Ansari, p. 2. MS. Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library.
 - Tarikh-i-Muzafferi*, Bankipore by Muhammad Ali Bin Hidayatullah Ansari, p. 356B, (MS. Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library).
 13. Franklin's *The History of the Reign of Shah Alam*, p. 67.

the whole of this campaign (9 months), Munir-ud-Dowlah¹⁴ remained with the Durrani King and after the victory of Panipat prevailed upon him to issue Firmans in the name of all the Princes of Hindusthan and also to write to Clive to recognize Shah Alam¹⁵ as the rightful Emperor. Ahmad Shah Abdali personally spoke to Shuja-ud-Dowlah and Najib-ud-Dowlah and established Prince Jawan-Bakht in the citadel of Shahjahanabad (Delhi) as deputy to his father Shah Alam, and struck coins and read the Khutba in his name. Shuja-ud-Dowlah also followed him and all these nobles, i. e. Najib-ud-Dowlah, Shuja-ud-Dowlah, Ahmad Khan Bungash, and his own ambassador, Munir-ud-Dowlah¹⁶ and others sent suppliques, presents, and congratulations to Shah Alam. Munnala¹⁷ in his *Tarikh-e-Shah Alam* (p. 9) mentions that Munir-ud-Dowlah sent the following Peshkash to Shah Alam from Delhi: "Thans of Kimkhwab, White Muslins and Jamdanis, fit for His Majesty's wardrobe and one Nalki Jhalardar, bejewelled." Ahmad Shah Abdali also sent words to Shah Alam through Munir-ud-Dowlah,¹⁸ bidding him to return to Delhi and take his seat on the throne of his ancestors. In this connexion the following translation of a letter¹⁹ from Dowager Queen Zinat Mahal, mother of Shah Alam, to Shah Alam, sent through Munir-ud-Dowlah, will be read with interest. In this letter she urged her son to come to Delhi immediately to meet the Durrani King and to receive the sovereignty of India from his hands She wrote :

14. *Sayer-ul-Mutakhirin*, Vol. II, (English Translation), p. 410.

15. Calendar of Persian Correspondence, Vol. I, Letters 981 & 1042.

16. *Sayer-ul-Mutakhirin*, Vol. II, p. 414 (English Translation).

17. MS. Khuda Bakhsh, Oriental Library, Bankipore.

18. See Franklin's *The History of the Reign of Shan Alam*, p. 71; *Ahwal-e-Salat*, p. 201, anonymous. (MS Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library, Bankipore).

19. S. C. Progs, Vol. II, 1761, p. 111.

"The King of Kings is arrived at the Qila.' To this day which is the 20th of the month of Rajab, I have frequently visited the King of Kings. He expects your arrival and is impatient for it. He has given me great encouragement in assuring me that he remains but for Shah Alam, and his word may be depended on. My son, be assured that on your coming everything will be concluded. When I desired the Shah (Durrani King) to send some token of favour to Shah Alam, he replied : 'I before sent a Surpech, etc., but he did not come : to repeat it is not proper. It is better that Shah Alam come himself, then I will put his country into his hands and depart.' Timur Shah has given me marks of his affection more than I can express, and he too desires most earnestly that you may arrive soon ; but he says that he understands some ill-advised people will not let you come, just as at this place ill-advised people say many things to the King of Kings, but he pays no regard to them and waits for the king. God forbid, says he, that Shah Alam should suffer himself to be led away by the advice of ill-designing men, and delay coming : 'This will not be well : We are faithful to our engagements. All this trouble that we have taken upon ourselves, is for the sake of Shah Alam Bahadur [sic] : Let him by all possible means come hither speedily.' My dear son, how long will it be before you come ? This is the time, and it is expedient and necessary that you come immediately. If the Shah, which God forbid, should be so pressed as to depart, fresh difficulties will fall out. Aga Riza is arrived with letters from you to the Shah and for Timur Shah, as also for Zeen Begum. I have read all these letters in the presence of the said persons. They said : 'We will send letters to invite Shah Alam, but your letters will have a greater effect if you invite him.' My son, if you find anything in those parts worthy of your choice, wash your hands of this place."

CHAPTER V

MUNIR-UD-DOWLAH OPENS NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE ENGLISH

Relations between the East India Company and Mir Qasim were becoming strained in Bengal at this time as the latter was proving a very different ruler from his father-in-law. After installation to the Masnad of Murshidabad, he had made good all his promises to the Company—the price of his elevation; and as on that account, the treasury had become empty, he had begun to regulate the revenue system of the Provinces; but he soon found out that it was an impossible task. He met with enormous difficulties¹ owing to the overbearing insolence of the Company's servants. The trade of the Company was confined to imports and exports and was free from Customs and transit duties and the Nazim's Government had never challenged this right. But when the servants of the Company began to abuse the passports of their employers by smuggling goods under its sanction, the Nazim naturally became indignant. The Company's servants were not only abusing the privileges granted to their employers by carrying out a private trade of their own duty-free, but were found to be selling this privilege to other Indian traders and these traders either had become commercial agents of the Company or used to bribe them with large sums for permission to trade in their name. The public revenue was thus shamefully defrauded and the ill-feeling resulted in the constant acts of hostility against the officials of the Nizamat. Over and above all this, Mir Qasim began to suspect that the English were secretly negotiating with the Emperor to acquire the Diwani of his Do-

1. H. Beveridge: *Comprehensive History of India* (London, 1858) Vol. I, p. 673.

minions² and so wrest the administration of his country from his hands altogether. As a matter of fact, the Council had once made an attempt to obtain for the Company, Subedarit Diwani and Bakhshigiri of the Army. However, acute frictions had arisen between the Nazim and the Company's servants.³ Every effort at conciliation only produced more hatred and every attempt to obtain a fair settlement was met with obstruction until at length Mir Qasim, seeing that his authority was in name only and the Company's word was law, resolved upon a bold step. He abolished all duties⁴ and thus placed his own subjects on an equal footing with the Company's servants. This was too much for his opponents who at once declared war upon him and having deposed him, brought out the aged Mir Ja'afar from his seclusion and again seated him on the Nizamat Masnad⁵.

From the above it will be seen that the English were masters of Bengal and Bihar for all practical purposes. They would place the man on the Nizamat Masnad who was willing to obey their orders, but depose him the moment he dissented from them. Their one aim was the exploitation of the country and nothing else. The revenue system had become a mockery, because trade and commerce, being after agriculture, the only big source of income, was practically in the hands of the Company, their servants and henchmen, and hardly a single pie of the revenue went to the coffers of the so-called Nizamat Government. Mir Ja'afar, after his second elevation, in a representation to the "Board", describes the plight of the country in the following words⁶: "Merchants refuse to pay the

2. Calendar of Persian Correspondence, Vol. I, letters 1291, 1334. 1338-A, B & C.

3. Ibid., Vol. I, Letters 1695, 1696, &c., pp. 1653-9.

4. Ibid., Introductory Notes to Vols. I and III, p. X; also Vol. I, letters 1695, 1781.

5. Court's letters to Bengal, February 1764.

6. Introductory Notes to Volume I, C. P. C.; Vol. III, p. xi, also vol. I, letter 2410.

customary duty under the cover of the protection of the English factories. The government of the Company have forcibly taken possession of the villages and forced tobacco and other goods upon the Talukdars and Rayats, whereby the country is desolated and a very great loss falls upon the Sircar. The agents of several Englishmen everywhere buy and sell rice and other goods in the market and to agriculturists of Bengal whereby the Faujdars and other officers are prevented from sending grain to the Army. The wood-farm belonging to Purnea which has hitherto paid a tribute of Rs. 50,000 a year, is now in the hands of the English, and His Excellency (Mir Ja'afar) does not receive a single Kawdi from it. The sepoys who are sent from factories in the different parts of the country to hear the complaints desolate the villages and put the Rayats to flight by their oppression, whereby His Excellency's revenues are greatly injured. The poor of the country who used always to deal in salt, betelnuts, tobacco, etc., have now been deprived of their daily bread by the trade of Europeans."

Mir Qasim who was watching these developments did not like to take things lying down, and again made a bid for power by attacking the English, but was defeated in an engagement at Patna. After his defeat he fled westwards and his intention at first was to go to Deccan and seek help from the Marathas, and failing there, to go to the Rohillas. He had also approached Shuja-ud-Dowlah who was secretly contemplating hostilities against the English, saw in Mir Qasim a convenient and a possible tool to be used against them. When the Company heard that Mir Qasim was invited to the Emperor's Court, they sent an emphatic protest⁷ to the Emperor and asked him to deliver him up. Shuja-ud-Dowlah, however, opened negotiations with the English and asked them to cede the Province of Bihar to Mir Qasim; but the English would have none of it. As Mir Qasim had promised Shuja-

7. C. P. C., Vol. I, letter 2005.

ud-Dowla a huge sum of money (eleven lakhs a month as the cost of war) in case he could wrest Bengal from the hands of the English and seat him on the Nizamat Masnad, he took up the cause of the fugitive Nazim with a show of generosity and prevailed upon the Emperor who had been living in his territory and practically depended upon him, to accompany him in an expedition towards the East, much against the advice of Munir-ud-Dowla⁸ who was averse to the Emperor picking up a quarrel with the English. However, Shah Alam, Shuja-ud-Dowla and the ex-Nazim—all marched towards Patna on 3rd May 1764, but were badly defeated and had to retire to Buxar where they encamped during the rains.

Major Munroe at the head of the largest English force available marched on Buxar, met Shuja-ud-Dowla and completely routed him on the 22nd May 1764. Shuja-ud-Dowla fled towards Allahabad after instructing Raja Beni Bahadur to persuade the Emperor to accompany him. But Shah Alam, on the advice of Munir-ud-Dowla, refused, and Beni Bahadur crossed the Ganges without him. Munir-ud-Dowla now saw his opportunity which he had long in view, and immediately opened negotiations on behalf of the Emperor with the English Generals, as he saw that they were the only people at that time in power who could restore to Shah Alam the throne of his ancestors. He presented General Carnac, and Majors Munroe and Fletcher to the Emperor. Negotiations were opened and as a result the Emperor on the 29th December 1764 by a Firman,⁹ assigned to the East India Company the country of Ghazipur and the rest of the Zamindari of Raja Balwant Singh; they (the Company) on their part agreed to hand over to the Emperor, Allahabad and the rest of the country belonging to Shuja-ud-Dowla.

8. *Alam Ashob* by Khairuddin Husain Khan, Vol. II, p. 147 (MS. in family collection).

9. C. P. C. Vol. I, letters 2583 & 2586 and Vol. II, letter 900.

Shuja-ud-Dowlah in the meantime had proceeded to Rohilkhand where, having met Hafiz Rahmat Khan, Ahmad Khan Bangash and other Afghan Sirdars as well as Ghaziuddin Khan, the treacherous Vazir of Alamgir II, collected an army and receiving some help from Malhar Rao Holkar, marched towards Allahabad. The Fort of Allahabad now being occupied by the English troops, Shuja-ud-Dowlah's army met the English at Kora and was again badly defeated. Shuja-ud-Dowlah fled towards Farrukhabad in order to collect another army; but on the advice of Ahmad Khan Bangash, he thought it prudent to sue for peace and personally visited the English Camp where Munir-ud-Dowlah interceded for him with the English.¹⁰

Lord Clive had returned to India at this time with a commission to reform abuses in the Company's service and to revise the relations between the Company and the Powers in the country. He immediately after his arrival began to work in order to establish the British Power in India on a surer foundation without effecting any direct revolution in the politics of the country. The results of the victory at Buxar gave in his hands the means of establishing systematic relations between the English, the Emperor and Shuja-ud-Dowlah, and with that end in view, while returning from a visit to the Emperor at Allahabad, he halted at Chhapra and called a conference, where Shuja-ud-Dowlah from Farrukhabad, Munir-ud-Dowlah as the King's representative from Allahabad and Raja Balwant Singh from Benares, met together to draw up a treaty.¹¹ As Clive had already decided that the time had come when the Company should no longer delay the assump-

10. *Shah Alam Nama* by Ghulam Ali Khan. MS. in Bengal Asiatic Society, P. 107.

11. *Bahr-ul-Mauwaj*, by Muhammad Ali Khan Ansari, P. 64-A (MS. in Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library)

„ *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh*, by Raja Kalyansingh, P. 164 (MS. ditto.)

„ *Sayer-ul-Mutakhirin*, Vol. II P. 122.

tion of the Diwani as well as the military defence of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, in August 1765, therefore, a **Grant of** series of treaties were concluded between the **Diwani** Emperor, Shuja-ud-Dowlah, the Nazim of Bengal and the English.¹² By the treaty with Shuja-ud-Dowlah, all his territories conquered by the English were restored to him, with the exception of the districts of Kora and Allahabad, which were ceded to the Emperor as a 'Demesne' for the support of his Royal dignity and expenses. Shuja-ud-Dowlah was also created the Vazier of the Empire by the Emperor (after deposing his own son) at the special request of Lord Clive, supported by Munir-ud-Dowlah.¹³ The Emperor had to grant to the East India Company the Diwani, i. e., the right of collecting and receiving revenues from Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, for an yearly tribute of rupees twenty-six lakhs. (Originally it was rupees fifty-two lakhs.) To Shah Alam these treaties brought nothing but disappointment and humiliation. After the defeat of Shuja-ud-Dowlah in the battle of Buxer, when the latter had fled to Rohilkhand and was intriguing with the Rohilla Chiefs to fight the English, negotiations between the Emperor and the English were started by Munir-ud-Dowlah and a treaty was concluded under which the Emperor was promised the whole of Oudh; but this new treaty scrapped the last one and Shah Alam only received Kora and Allahabad, becoming, in fact, inferior in position to his own Minister. The Vazier became an ally of the Company while the Emperor was reduced to the position of a mere pensioner. Thus, by one stroke of the pen, Clive reduced the Emperor to a shadow and Shuja-ud-Dowlah, hitherto a powerful noble, to the position

12. Appendix D, Atchinson's *Treaties, Engagements & Sanads*.

13. Shah Alam's letter to Mr. Verelst, Governor of Bengal, dated 16th May 1768, C. P. C., Vol. II. letter 950; and Shuja-ud-Dowlah's letter to Lord Clive, letter 2763, Vol. I.

of a subservient and dependent ally. In this wise the whole dream of Munir-ud-Dowlah to revive the past glory of the Mughals in the person of Shah Alam with the help of the English was shattered once for all. Munir-ud-Dowlah could not but submit to the powerful intrigue of Clive in obtaining for the Company the grant of Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from the Emperor, because to readers of history it should be patent that the English, after the battle of Plassey, had virtually become masters of Bengal and Bihar. The Nazims were simply puppets under them. It must have appeared to Munir-ud-Dowlah that to get revenues from Bengal, Bihar and Orissa through the Nazims was a very doubtful proposition if a direct understanding was made with them; so, in the circumstances, the safest course was to recognize the English as the Diwan for the purposes of revenue collections and receive a stipulated tribute from them. He perhaps had still faith in the English and had thought that he was bargaining for a source of a permanent income for the Emperor. He perhaps also apprehended that if nothing was done to secure some tribute for the Emperor from the revenues of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, it was quite possible that Clive might come to some definite understanding with the puppet Nazims and leave the Emperor absolutely in the lurch. No doubt it was these considerations which, as a loyal Minister and a man who had devoted his whole life in the service of the house of Taimur, compelled him reluctantly to acquiesce in the arrangements made by Clive.

CHAPTER VI

MUNIR-UD-DOWLAH'S POLICY ON THE INVASION OF INDIA BY AHMAD SHAH ABDALI IN 1767

Clive sailed for England in January 1767 leaving George Verelst in charge of the Company's affairs in Bengal. Saif-ud-Dowlah was at this time a puppet on the Masnad of Murshidabad; but the fugitive Mir Qasim had not given up all hopes of regaining Bengal and driving the English from that country. He had been in negotiations with Ahmad Shah Abdali and had kept him informed of all that had happened since the Battle of Panipat, and that all the good work done by him (Ahmad Shah Abdali) in defeating the Maratha forces and the orders that he had issued to the Nobles of Hindustan to seat Shah Alam on the throne of Delhi had come to nought, while a third power had arisen which by dint of intrigues and ability had not only become Masters of Bengal, but had brought under its territories countries up to the limits of the Doab. Shuja-ud-Dowlah had become a dependent under the English and the Emperor Shah Alam a mere pensioner confined at Allahabad. The Marathas under Raghunath Rao, the uncle of the young Peshwa Madhao Rao, joined by another Chief Malhar Rao Holkar, had begun devastating the country. The Sikhs were also giving trouble in the Punjab and were unfurling the flag of independence. All these incidents must have weighed with Ahmad Shah Abdali and therefore he again entered India crossing the Indus with a very large army in 1767 and marched to Lahore. No sooner did news of the Shah's approach reach India than Raghunath Rao changed his plans. He made peace with the Jats, whose country he had hitherto been devastating, and invited the other Chiefs of Hindustan to combine against the Shah.

Ahmad Shah Abdali, in the meantime, having defeated the Sikhs in an engagement on the Banks of the Jhelum, sent invitations to Shuja-ud-Dowla and the other Chiefs of Northern India calling upon them to join him. Shuja-ud-Dowla in one of his letters¹ to Verelst describes the advance of Shah Abdali as follows: "Shah Abdali has advanced three kos from Lahore towards Shahjahanabad. He is coming with vast and powerful forces. The Rohilla Chiefs have received letters from him and their conduct has the appearance of resolution and timidity. When such is the attitude of Shah's friends, what can he expect from others? Najib-ud-Dowla had gone to him. The writer believes that he too will² receive letters from the Shah. As no one wants to help him except the Governor, (he) requests to know what to write in reply. Shah's troops exercise the greatest severities and cruelties and carry all before them. The Governor's directions are requisite. The time calls for expedition. Delay in the negotiations will have the worst consequences."

The English naturally were very much alarmed by this visit to India of Ahmad Shah Abdali and fearing lest the Emperor and the other Chiefs join the Shah in a league in order to subjugate the whole of Hindustan, they resolved to keep back the Emperor, Shuja-ud-Dowla and Munir-ud-Dowla from meeting the Durrani King or having anything to do with him. In a letter to the Vazier³ dated 14th February 1767, Verelst writes as follows: "Has already written to the Vazier concerning either his or the King's dominions and the news enclosed by the Vazier also reached the same conclusion. But if it happens otherwise, the English forces are ready and can, at any moment, be induced to defend his and the royal dominions. The Vazier knows very well that the English are honest and upright people and

1. C. P. C. Vol. II, letter 20, p. 13.

2. C. P. C. Vol. II, letter 52, page 20.

never break their engagements ; that hitherto they had inviolably observed the treaty entered into with him and His Majesty and that in view thereto they will not move one hair's breadth therefrom. But though the King entertains feelings of suspicion towards the English, they on their part shall never fail in allegiance to him." While Munir-ud-Dowlah in his letter to George Verelst, dated the 27th February 1767, sounds the English as to their policy towards the Shah and writes:—"The writer addressed Lord Clive on the subject of the Shah's approach to these parts to know if it would be advisable to pursue pacific measures and, if necessary, with Shuja-ud-Dowlah's concurrence, to proceed to Lahore in order to bring about an object of so much general good and consequence. Lord Clive left India without sending him a reply. At this time Vakils of all the powers in Hindustan had sent Arzis to the Shah. Although the writer is perfectly sure that it will be impracticable for the Shah to reach Delhi or other parts this year by reason of the opposition of the Sikhs, yet, should the powers of Hindustan aid him, what attitude would the English adopt? Requests the Governor to enlighten the writer on this point. Najib-ud-Dowlah is at the ghat of Ganjipur on the Banks of the Jamna. He has sent Rao Meghraj, his Vakil, with Arzis to the Shah. Should the latter advance to Sirhind, Najib-ud-Dowlah will repair to his presence." In another letter,³ dated the 3rd March 1767, Munir-ud-Dowlah says: "The Shah lies encamped between the two rivers. All the powers of Hindustan have written Arzis to him. His Majesty alone has been silent, at which the Shah has expressed much surprise. Desires to know whether the King with propriety should address the Shah or not." To which the Governor replied⁴: "Has received his letter. Approves his going to Fyzabad at the

3. C. P. C., Vol. II. letter 107.

4. Ibid Vol. II. letter 139.

5. Ibid. letter 145.

invitation of Shuja-ud-Dowlah to discuss with him the state of affairs. Desires that whatever may be decided upon may be communicated to the writer, who is heartily ready to do whatever may tend to the welfare of His Majesty and the prosperity of the Empire. Does not think that Javahir Singh, Jat, Najib-ud-Dowlah and the other Rohilla Sirdars would go over to the Shah and surrender their territories to him. The Shah has no object in invading India but to obtain money and he has no right thereto except might. In the writer's opinion, the said Sirdars are fully aware of this, and in imitation of the English, the King and the Vazier, are likely to enter into alliance to prevent the Shah from devastating their territories. Should the Jats and the Rohillas combine and offer the Sikhs a little assistance, it is probable that Shah will suffer defeat and disgrace. In view of these facts and in view also of the fact that it is generally known that the English are firm in their treaty they made with the King and the Vazier, and are ready to defend the Empire, five battalions of sepoys will be sent as reinforcements, if necessary. Desires that His Majesty may be informed of this and assured thereby of the loyalty and devotion of the English. The Nawab Vazier also may be informed of this and told that the English are always ready to protect his dominions. Hopes to be informed of whatever passes between the addressee and Shuja-ud-Dowlah at Fyzabad. Does not think it advisable for the King to write to the Shah or for the addressee to go to him, and opines that many evils would result therefrom. Moreover it would be below the dignity of our King, 'the Lord of the World,' to write to a man who has come to India accompanied by a large army with hostile intentions. When the expected letters from the Shah are received and their contents are known, it would be easy to decide whether to reply them or not." Verelst also wrote to Shuja-ud-Dowlah⁶ in the same strain and impressed.

6. C. P. C. Vol. II, letter 201.

upon him that "the English will never depart one hair's breadth from the engagement entered into with His Majesty," and further added that "as long as the writer is alive or there is an Englishman in Hindustan, His Excellency will never want assistance as the interests of His Excellency and those of the English are one and will always remain so, it is necessary to unite and make a provision against this impending danger," and suggested that as the English forces were composed entirely of infantry and those of the Shah entirely of cavalry, it was therefore necessary that Shuja-ud-Dowlah, "should raise a formidable body of cavalry." With regard to the Jats and the Rohillas he further suggested that "it is advisable that His Excellency should endeavour to procure from them a plain answer as to the part they intended to play." He also, suggested that an alliance be made with the Jats and the Rohillas against the Shah and with that end in view, wrote: "It seems proper that a trusty person should, without delay, be sent to them with letters representing the critical state of affairs and the propriety of a general union against the common enemy and telling them that we were ready to support and assist them in every way. If they unite with us with heart and soul the progress of the Shah towards these parts will be stopped, and that villain Qasim will fall into our hands." Verelst also forwarded two letters to Shuja-ud-Dowlah for transmission to Hafiz Rahmat Khan and Dundi Khan "enclosed in a melon". But Munir-ud-Dowlah had a different policy altogether in his mind and he was very much desirous that a treaty of alliance may be brought about between Ahmad Shah Abdali and the Emperor Shah Alam and that the former should aid him in establishing his sovereignty over India, and with that end in view, he again wrote to the Governor on the 26th March 1767, to the following effect⁷:

7. C. P. C., Vol. II, letter 214.

"On the 10th March an Arzi came from Najib-ud-Dowlah to His Majesty. After perusing it, His Majesty enclosed it in a shuqqa and sent it to the Governor. His Majesty has not yet had any correspondence or negotiations with the Shah and leaves the determination of all measures to the Governor's counsel and wisdom. It is a true proverb that 'Prevention is better than cure'. As Najib-ud-Dowlah has represented, that Shah intends to stay two or three years in Hindustan and if Ahmad Khan and the other Rohilla Sirdars join him, the consequences will be very grave and the remedy of that will be very difficult. If the Governor and the Council out of their wisdom think an alliance with the Shah to be advisable, it is requested that His Excellency may represent the same to His Majesty and send the writer instructions that he may act agreeably thereto. As the Shah has advanced fourteen kos on this side of Sirhind, and the time is short, it is hoped that the Governor will send the writer a speedy answer. His Majesty is anxiously expecting an answer from the Governor. Has spoken at length upon the subject of the alliance and peace with the Shah to Colonel Barker, who has probably informed the Governor of it. It is a true proverb that 'Peace is most excellent'. The writer desires nothing so much as the good of the country and the peace of the people of God. If the Governor is in favour of an alliance with the Shah, the writer is ready to go to him whenever his Majesty and the Governor order him. By the blessing of God a firm league and friendship will be duly and happily entered upon, the counsels and evil views of our enemies frustrated, and the writer will return loaded with honour. Should this proposal meet with His Excellency's approbation, he should send the writer an Arzi for the Shah and a letter of friendship for Shah Wali Khan, his Vazier, with expedition." Najib-ud-Dowlah also had suggested in his letter ^B to the Emperor dated 26th March 1767 the

advisability of deputing Munir-ud-Dowlah to Ahmad Shah Abdali as the former "possessed a personal influence in the Shah's Court". But as the Governor was objecting to the proposition of an accommodation with the Shah, Nawab Munirud-Dowlah again wrote⁹ to him on the 1st of April 1767 saying: "That with regard to the Governor's objection to the King's proposing an accommodation with the Shah says that he has formerly conducted an embassy to the Shah on the part of Alamgir II and his present Majesty, and acquitted himself so well as to have acquired great honour thereby. He recommends strongly the propriety of his being deputed to negotiate a treaty with the Shah and instances in favour of this the fact that Nadir Shah's victories were due only to his adversaries neglecting his proffered terms of friendship." The Emperor also was very much in favour of deputing Munir-ud-Dowlah to Ahmad Shah Abdali in order to bring about an alliance with the latter and on the 1st April 1767 therefore wrote to the Governor.¹⁰ "As deputies from Rohillas have already waited on the Shah, some trusty person from Shuja-ud Dowlah and Munir-ud-Dowlah from the Royal Presence should be sent to the Shah's Camp". And writing to Ahmad Shah Abdali,¹¹ while congratulating him on his victory over the Sikhs, wrote as follows: "Soon after despatching this letter of friendship, the writer proposes deputing the High in Power and Authority, Eminent in Experience and Wisdom, Most Excellent among the servants of 'our' mutual greatness and the most sincere Promoter of 'our' joint interests and glory, Munir-ud-Dowlah, to His Majesty's ever fortunate Camp; and from his mouth His Majesty will learn the sacred resolutions and requests of the writer who is as the youngest born of His Majesty's

9. C. P. C., letter 251.

10. Ibid. Vol. II, letter 252.

11. Ibid. letter 259.

children. The most earnest request he has to make to His Gracious Majesty is that he would condescend from the delicious fountains of his most friendly letters to allay the writer's thirst and to give him an opportunity of tasting the water of His Majesty's Presence, filling him thereby with unspeakable delight."

The Vazier was also outwardly supporting Shah Alam and writing ¹² to the Emperor on 1st April 1767 in reply to his letter had said :—"Has received His Majesty's letter showing the necessity of deputing Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah to the Shah. In the writer's opinion, the proposal is founded on wisdom but then it is expedient, that the consent of the English Sirdars should be obtained. After this is done, it will then be in all respects proper for Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah to proceed with all expedition. Muqim Beg Chobdar has arrived from the Shah. Has despatched to His Majesty copies of the Shah's and Shah Vali Khan's letters. Shah Vali Khan asked the writer to send a person of confidence with all expedition. Accordingly, Ali Beg Khan will receive his despatches for that purpose. The sending of the Nawab is an affair of importance." Here, Shuja-ud-Dowlah was playing rather a double game. He knew full well that the English were definitely against the Emperor having anything to do with Ahmad Shah Abdali, as would appear from a letter ¹³ written by the Governor to him wherein the policy of the East India Company had been fully made plain with regard to Shah Alam's intentions of entering into an alliance with Ahmad Shah Abdali. The Governor, after referring to the declaration of Shah Alam drawn by Colonel Sir Robert Barker, had said : "Has just received a letter from the Colonel enclosing a declaration from the King. The whole tenor of the declaration is so unworthy of the undaunted spirit of the Royal House of Taimur, so

12. C. P. C., letter 253.

13. Ibid. Vol. II, letter 225.

injurious to the honour of the English Nation and so contrary to the rules of sound policy, that the Governor cannot say whether his concern or astonishment at the declaration was greater. The King has been repeatedly assured in the most solemn manner of the loyalty and devotion of the English. Yet notwithstanding all this, he lends an easy ear to evil insinuations who create in his mind doubts of the fidelity of the English. His Majesty is very anxious to enter into negotiations with the Shah, for which the Governor sees absolutely no reason." Yet he (Shuja-ud-Dowlah) was advising the Emperor to obtain the "consent of the English Sirdars" which he knew could never be procured.

It is abundantly clear that one of the reasons which impelled Ahmad Shah Abdali to visit India at this time was also to help Shah Alam again in establishing his position as the real ruler of the country, which is evident from the Papers of Intelligence¹⁴ dated 15th April 1767 wherein Shah Wali Khan, the Vazier of Ahmad Shah Abdali, is reported to have told Yakub Ali Khan, the Wakil of Shuja-ud-Dowlah that "the Shah will certainly maintain his position at Lahore and chastise the Sikhs. I will remain with him. You must for some days take leave of the Shah and go to the presence of Shah Alam and tell him on the part of His Majesty to hasten towards Delhi with the Vazier Shuja-ud-Dowlah, and apply himself to the ordering of the affairs of the Empire." That Shah Alam was ever so anxious to go over to the Shah also appears from a letter¹⁵, dated 30th April 1767, from the Vazier to the Governor, wherein Shuja-ud-Dowlah had written that when Muqim Beg delivered him the despatches from the Shah to Shah Alam at Allahabad, His Majesty said: "Had the Shah marched to Shahjahanabad, I would have even now repaired thither, and at this time were the Shah only to send

14. C. P. C., page 90.

15. Ibid. Vol, II, letter 377.

a body of twenty thousand horses thither I would go. I am steadfast ; constraint has placed me here." It is not at all surprising that after the treatment received from the English and from Shuja-ud-Dowlah, Shah Alam was desirous of getting out of their clutches ; but it was not to be. Shuja-ud-Dowlah had his own reasons for not condescending to encourage Shah Alam to have negotiations with Ahmad Shah Abdali. He was trying his level best to get the English interested in his designs against the Rohillas and was recommending an alliance with the Marathas and the Jats in order to invade the Rohilla territories. In fact, he could not afford to aid Ahmad Shah Abdali in subjugating Hindustan inasmuch as it was quite possible that the Shah, after occupying Oudh, would not have treated him as liberally as the English had done. If the Vazier had acted otherwise, it is doubtful whether the English could have successfully resisted the Shah's endeavours to penetrate into Bengal and possess himself of that province. After occupying Oudh, he was bound to invade Bengal in order to wrest that province from the hands of the English and make it over to Mir Qasim on whose supplications he had come to India. It is not at all surprising that after the due disappointment which Munir-ud-Dowlah experienced at the hands of Clive at Chhapra, the Nawab, whose one aim in life was the restoration of the Mughal power, should have looked to Ahmad Shah Abdali for helping Shah Alam to regain the throne of his ancestors. In his voluminous correspondence with the English quoted above, his desire to go over to Ahmad Shah Abdali by offering himself as an ambassador is a clear indication of what was in his mind and that undoubtedly was to bring another ally to the help of Shah Alam. The scheme desired by Munir-ud-Dowlah never came to fructify and Ahmad Shah Abdali waiting in vain for a response from Shah Alam and Shuja-ud-Dowlah at last left for Kandhar.

It is alleged that Ahmad Shah Abdali had ambitions to occupy the throne of Delhi, but that cannot be true, as he had refused the offer made by Najib-ud-Dowlah and other Nobles, after the Battle of Panipat but had instead, invited Shah Alam to Delhi to occupy the throne of his ancestors

CHAPTER VII

MUNIR-UD-DOWLAH AND SHUJA-UD-DOWLAH

Munir-ud-Dowla's rise to fame and power began to alarm Shuja-ud-Dowla. Munir-ud-Dowla, in the words of Muhammad Ali Khan Ansari¹, "by dint of ability, service and sense of duty, had acquired such a hold over the affairs of the Empire both at the Imperial Court and outside that his word had become law. Whenever he used to be absent from Court he used to appoint Siraj-ud-Dowla Mirza Akbar Ali Khan, the maternal grand-father of Murshidzada Afaq Mirza Akbar Shah, as his deputy." Shuja-ud-Dowla felt that so long as Munir-ud-Dowla remained at Court and retained full powers in the management of the Royal affairs he would not be able to carry out his designs. Therefore he tried to bring the English, who had begun to dislike Munir-ud-Dowla on account of his policy towards the Durrani King, to his aid; and writing² to George Verelst on the 15th April 1767, desired that the Governor should write to the Emperor, recommending to him that the affairs of the Royal House may be placed in his (Shuja-ud-Dowla's) hands. But nothing substantial resulted from this move and after waiting for some time, he again wrote³ to the Governor on the 15th May 1767, lamenting his position in the following words:—"Has written to the Governor two letters concerning the present state of things, the negotiations in the Presence about the Vizarat and the question of his being entrusted with the management of the business of His Majesty. Seeing that

1. *Bahr-ul-Mawwaq*. (MS in Khuda Baksh Oriental Library)

2. C. P. C. Vol. II, letter 311.

3. Ibid, letter 948. *

His Excellency has recommended him to proceed by degrees in the business of the Vizarat, the regulation of affairs and the assumption of the business of the Empire, he, by no means wishes to precipitate matters. For the rest, it is evident that he has no enmity or hatred against Munir-ud-Dowlah, nor does he wish that any harm should happen to Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah or that he should not remain in the Presence. On the contrary, if His Majesty is inclined to heap even greater favours upon him than before, the writer will be highly satisfied. Has no quarrel with the Nawab. Is only anxious to enter upon his rights. Should he go into the Presence to find Munir-ud-Dowlah in possession of the business of the Vizarat, and attended on by all people and Mutasaddis, while the writer remains without employ and a mere spectator? He leaves it to the Governor's own equitable mind to decide what reflection it will cast on the writer and what a bad appearance it will have. Prior to this, it was determined that Munir-ud-Dowlah should accompany Colonel Barker and that, by the latter's mediations, all impressions against him should be effaced. After this the writer was to go into the Presence and enter upon the duties of the Vizarat and other just privileges according to the recognized custom. Munir-ud-Dowlah has not come in the company of Colonel Barker. The writer mentioned all the points to Colonel Barker so that the latter might satisfy Munir-ud-Dowlah." In this way, Shuja-ud-Dowlah was trying to interfere in the management of the affairs of the Empire on the plea of his being the Vazier and was trying to oust Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah, who occupied the position of a *de facto* Vazier of the Empire at that time, by bringing in the English to aid him. But the Emperor, who could only nourish the bitterest hatred for the Vazier to which was added the suspicion that he was again trying to get him in his power, could not be persuaded by the English to bring Shuja-ud-Dowlah again

into his favour ; so much so that he even refused Munir-ud-Dowlah permission to go to Shuja-ud-Dowlah and wrote⁴ to the Governor saying :—“What power has he [Munir-ud-Dowlah] to go to Shuja-ud-Dowlah without His Majesty's order and permission ? We declare before God that Munir-ud-Dowlah never gave us bad counsel on any occasion, and the All High knoweth that up to the present time he never made any representations to us in Shuja-ud-Dowlah's disfavour. So far from this, *that in conjunction with Lord Clive at Chhapra, he got the Vizarat conferred upon Shuja-ud-Dowlah by the removal of the Shahzada therefrom* and we conferred the Khil'at of the Vizarat on Shuja-ud-Dowlah upon his arrival in the Presence, after having removed our son therefrom. This we did because we regarded obliging Lord Clive above every consideration and because we regarded and do regard the representation of Lord Clive and you, the strength of the arm of our Empire, above every other concern. Nevertheless, Lord Clive procured the appointment of Shuja-ud-Dowlah to the Vizarat upon this condition that he made Munir-ud-Dowlah his Naib in the Vizarat and other offices. General Carnac, Captain Swinton are well acquainted with this and above all Maharaja Nob Kishan, who was the channel of this negotiation. Besides this, on the day we honoured Shuja-ud-Dowlah with the Khil'at of the Vizarat in the presence of Colonel Barker, he himself constituted Munir-ud-Dowlah as Naib agreeably to our Sacred Pleasure and Lord Clive's wish. On this condition it was that we agreed to displacing our son. Ever since we were Shahzada (heir-apparent), Munir-ud-Dowlah has attended us and also demonstrated much allegiance to our Royal father, and has served former Kings. Now that we, by your loyalty and attachment and those of the English Sardars, have been invested with Dominion and

4. C. P. C. Vol. II, letter 950.

Power, if we reward not those who have long and faithfully served us, it would be a deviation from the regard of our subjects and the rules of the Empire. Every one who has shown true allegiance to the descendants of Taimur has been highly ennobled and many have ungratefully abandoned from the fidelity and duty to the descendants of that august House and reduced the Empire to the distressed situation. Safdar Jung's [Shuja-ud-Dowlah's father] contempt and bad faith¹ to former Kings need not be instanced. It is well-known to God and the world. We are well acquainted with the ancestors of all the great Umars. You also represented to us that in consideration of his loyalty and good services we had honoured Shuja-ud-Dowlah with the Vizarat and other high employs but that he was not in the possession of the privilege thereof in Presence. Our loyal servant! With the excellence of Shuja-ud-Dowlah's services is what we now inform you of. Having our Sacred Presence in his hands, contrary to our Sublime Pleasure, he brought his army to Patna against the English and afterwards engaged them at Buxer, where, by the blessing of God, he was defeated and the good fortune of the English proved to be victorious. By this means we became master of our own propitious House and Mr Vansittart and the late Jaffar Ali Khan made representations to us that if we separate ourselves from Shuja-ud-Dowlah, they would pay us six lakhs of rupees as a Peshkash, besides the annual tribute. General Carnac and Major Munroe made similar representations to us to separate ourselves from Shuja-ud-Dowlah and in compliance therewith we halted at Benares where General Carnac, Major Munroe, Major Fletcher and other English Sardars were introduced to our Presence by Munir-ud-Dowlah. We have now sent our Trustee and well-beloved Pandit to you from our enlightened Presence.

5. Safdar Jung rebelled against Emperor Muhammad Shah and laid siege to Delhi Fort.

He will inform you of all our diverse commands by word of mouth." In the King's Mandate, besides the foregoing, occurs the following : " After the defeat of Shuja-ud-Dowlah, His Majesty remained some time at Benares and the English Sardars were introduced to him by Munir-ud-Dowlah. It was then determined that the territories of Shuja-ud-Dowlah and the office of the Vizarat should both belong to Shahzada and the regulation of the Royal Sarcar was invested in Munir-ud-Dowlah. His Majesty approved this arrangement as he was fully satisfied with the loyalty and fair intentions of the English Sardars. Afterwards a new plan was settled by Lord Clive, viz. that the Suba of Oudh should be granted to Shuja-ud-Dowlah and the Subas of Kora and Allahabad, the ancient appendages of the throne, set apart as a Royal demesne. His Majesty considered the representation of Lord Clive and gave his Royal assent to these alterations. When a meeting was held some time afterwards between Lord Clive, Shuja-ud-Dowlah and Munir-ud-Dowlah at Chhapra, Lord Clive addressed His Majesty through Munir-ud-Dowlah from that place interceding on Shuja-ud-Dowlah's behalf and asking him to confer upon the latter the Vizarat. His Majesty acquiesced in the proposal notwithstanding the unpleasantness which attended the displacing of the Shahzada, on the explicit condition that Munir-ud-Dowlah should officiate for Shuja-ud-Dowlah in the Sublime Sarcar. But this friendship of Lord Clive and this condescension of His Majesty in removing his own son from the dignity settled upon him after many difficulties made no impression on Shuja-ud-Dowlah. Once more this Sardar proved himself unworthy of the good fortune. He attained to an important and high dignity without any pains or trouble. Knew not the duties of it and that of nothing but how to obtain that honour from the English Sardars which he had lost. Now he is aiming at bringing His Majesty's fortune and

propitious Person again into his power by thousand wiles. But His Majesty is too well acquainted with the traitors produced in that family ever to be deceived again. Let the Vazier set at work with what engines he pleases. He has worked on the Governor to make frequent representations in his favour but the Governor is not versed in the politics of the Umara of Hindustan, by which they have reduced this Great Empire to such distress and weakness. The Governor has worded his representations according to the information given to him by the Vazier's Vakil. Wants the Governor not to be misled by the wiles of anyone." Instead of entertaining the representations made by the English on behalf of Shuja-ud-Dowla, the Emperor even commanded Shuja-ud-Dowla to hand over to Munir-ud-Dowla the patent⁶ of his office, the Artillery and the Magazine.⁷ Shuja-ud-Dowla thus failed in his machinations against Munir-ud-Dowla for the time being and the latter continued to carry on the full duties of the Vizarat and the management of the Royal House and Empire.

7. Introductory Notes, Vol. II. to C. P. C.; Vol. III, p. xvii.

CHAPTER VIII

MUNIR-UD-DOWLAH DEPUTED TO CALCUTTA BY THE EMPEROR

Shuja-ud-Dowlah was far from keeping quiet after the last rebuff from the Emperor, but had begun engineering intrigues in the Court. He again wrote¹ to the Governor to the effect that "until the affairs of the Vizarat were settled, he would never cease to insist on the point." He even went so far as to suggest to the Governor that the insignia of artillery and the seal of the Vizarat that were in possession of Munir-ud-Dowlah may be taken away from him and made over to Colonel Barker and the latter may be invested with the powers to direct or inspect the administration of those duties—which, to put it very mildly, was tantamount to making over the Empire to the English. The Governor again insisted on the Emperor the advisability of Munir-ud-Dowlah proceeding to Fyzabad in order to compromise with Shuja-ud-Dowlah. But Shah Alam was adamant, and wrote² to the Governor with his own hands that "Munir-ud-Dowlah presented the Governor's letters, on which his illustrious bosom was much displeased. Although Munir-ud-Dowlah has repeatedly solicited leave to go to Shuja-ud-Dowlah, His Majesty has refused him permission, because His Majesty thought such a journey dangerous to the welfare of his State and subversive of the dignity of the Throne. Will do in this affair whatever his fortunate and propitious self ponders, matures and approves." The quarrel between Shuja-ud-Dowlah and the Emperor was not at all congenial to Munir-

1. C. P. C., Vol. II, letter 894.

2. Ibid., letter 909. (In the Emperor's own hand)

ud-Dowlah and therefore he wrote³ to the Governor to the following effect :—“Up to this time His Majesty has not given permission to the writer to proceed to Fyzabad on a visit to the Vazier. As this is an affair between a Sovereign and a subject, he cannot set out without the orders of His Majesty. Has already represented the state of things in his former letter. Had in the meantime offered such arguments for the Sublime consideration for summoning the Vazier to the Court as seemed most agreeable to his immutable fortune and interest. But His Majesty has not listened to anything the writer has represented. Has, in short, seriously weighed and deliberated on the question and from observing and penetrating into the bosom of His Majesty the writer plainly discerns that it will be impossible for His Majesty and the Vazier to join hands with mutual sincerity, and that, right or wrong, the writer must submit to the calumny of them both. If the writer importunes His Majesty, he will, of course suspect the writer of being at the bottom of the affair. Is in the meantime tortured with anxiety, lest the Governor should imagine him dilatory and trifling, and endeavouring to evade his departure for the Vazier's Court. Should the Governor desire to take a holiday at this season, nothing can be more suitable at this juncture than that His Excellency should pay a visit in person to His Majesty and then send for the Vazier and see them both united and firm in each other's confidence. Supposing it is impossible for His Excellency to undertake a journey hither, he should send for the writer. Can, with ease, reach Calcutta in fifteen days by water and after remaining for ten days there, and unfolding himself personally to His Excellency, he may take leave on the eleventh day and return with all expedition to the Presence. There is now an absolute necessity for the writer's having one more interview with the Governor and it is of the greatest importance that he

3. C. P. C., Vol. II, letter 911.

should explain diverse matters to His Excellency face to face." George Verelst acceded to this request of the Nawab and started for Allahabad, but falling ill at Murshidabad, had to return to Calcutta, and from there wrote to the Emperor requesting that Munir-ud-Dowlah may be sent to him. As various matters, particularly the question of the Bengal remittances and the expedition to Delhi had to be settled once for all, the Emperor deputed Munir-ud-Dowlah to Calcutta,⁴ who left Allahabad in September 1767. The Emperor writing⁵ to the Governor about Munir-ud-Dowlah's deputation,

4. Karam Ali, in his *Tarikh-i-Muzaffarnama* (pp 211 and 212 B MS in Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library) gives a charming and graphic account of the reception given to Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah at Murshidabad on his way to Calcutta by Saif-ud-Dowlah, the Nazim of Bengal: "At this time when Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah was going from the Seat of Khilafat the second time on a political mission to Calcutta, the heaven-like Nawab (Saif-ud-Dowlah) on hearing the approach of the above-mentioned Nawab went in a boat up to village Bahmania, a distance of two hours' journey, in order to receive him. On the next day he visited the Nawab and both of them [Munir-ud-Dowlah and Saif-ud-Dowlah] together entered the City of Murshidabad. By the order of the Nawab, Nazim Ahsan-ud-din Khan, Mir-Imarat, illuminated the whole of Nishatbagh in such a way that it rivalled the bejewelled sky. He made arrangements for entertainments on a scale fit only for Kings, with all kinds of edibles and drinks, songsters and dancers, masters in their arts who had made Venus their slave, and fire-works of innumerable varieties, the display of which was one of the wonders of the world. All the above entertainments and displays were arranged in honour of the reception accorded to the great Nawab. English Sardars were also invited to the entertainment. After the reception, Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah left for Calcutta. Nawab Saif-ud-Dowlah accompanied him up to the village Bahmania in order to see him off."
5. C. P. C., Vol. II, letter 537. *Tarikh-i-Shah Alam*, by Munnatal, p. 48A. (M S. in Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library)
Ibrah-Nama by Moulvi Khairuddin Muhammad, p. 295. (MS Dc.)

said :—"His ever fortunate and propitious Majesty is dispatching his faithful servant and Minister Munir-ud-Dowlah on business of the utmost importance to Calcutta. It is requisite that the Governor should consider his sentiments as the sentiments of His propitious Majesty himself, and execute them accordingly ; for Munir-ud-Dowlah is the Sole Ruler and Manager of His Majesty's Auspicious Sarcar and he considers the honour and reputation of Munir ud-Dowlah as his own. He is the firm and steady Naib of His Majesty's Propitious House and is unrivalled in the management of the concerns of the enlightened Empire. There is no other servant in whom His Majesty ever reposes his confidence. His ever fortunate and propitious Majesty is absolute in the disposal of the offices of his Sacred Throne. Whomsoever His Majesty thinks worthy of his favour, him he will honour, nor will he in this particular listen to the solicitations and entreaties of others. [A direct hint that Shah Alam was not inclined to oust Munir-ud-Dowlah from the position of the Premier and appoint Shuja-ud-Dowlah instead.] Directs that if any other person applies to the Governor for employment near His Majesty's Sacred Person, the Governor may in no way countenance him, but give him a plain and explicit answer that such is His Majesty's Auspicious Mandate in this particular." "Is highly pleased⁶ to receive the remittance of bills for rupees two lakhs thirty-four thousand five hundred enclosed in his Arzi. Confers upon him a Munsab of eight thousand with the title. Has sent him a royal dress and jewels with a Memorandum of the particulars which will be delivered to him by Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah. Munir-ud-Dowlah's going to the Governor is the same as if His Majesty were to set in person. His honour and that of His Majesty are the same. He is invested with the whole management of the affairs of the Royal Sarcar. Desires

6. C. P. C., Vol. II, letter 564.

that having conversed with him fully, the Governor will send him back with all expedition." To which the Governor, after thanking Shah Alam for the honour conferred upon him, replied⁷: "Having with due regard to His Majesty's Sublime interest and the State of the Empire and with all the attention and care considered the mandates which Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah has brought from the Sacred Presence, the writer has communicated the results of his deliberations to Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah. The latter will lay them before His Majesty with all other particulars which had been debated and concluded at the conference between him and the writer." It appears that Munir-ud-Dowlah's mission to the Governor was not an unqualified success at this time inasmuch as, excepting the arrangements for the regular payment of the tribute, all other matters were shelved for the time being, particularly the question of the Emperor's expedition to Delhi, a question on which the Governor wrote to Munir-ud-Dowlah in his letter⁸ dated 22nd November 1767 to the following effect: "Can easily conceive of the anxiety of His Majesty's heart to obey the dictates of parental wishes and the calls of a kind and venerable mother [Shah Alam's mother being in Delhi]. His Majesty may be assured that it was not only the wish of Lord Clive to see him in the immediate possession of the full Sovereign rights of the House of Taimur but that such is also the heartiest wish of the writer, and of every Englishman. The writer's conduct and attachment in this matter will be fully manifested when His Majesty compares the present situation of his affairs with the distracted and confused state of the whole Empire but a few years ago. The Royal demesne of Allahabad and Kora, the territories of Shuja-ud-Dowlah, the Subahs of Bengal, Bihar and Carnatac, all form

7. C. P. C. Vol. II, letter 667.

8. Ibid., letter 660.

part of the Empire now. [The English Empire, surely !] Every attempt that is being pursued lends to the elevation of His Majesty and to the enforcement of that obedience which His Majesty wishes to see observed to himself. The English are exerting their whole strength to promote the Royal Cause. When prosperity and success have so far crowned their labours, let not His Majesty by an impatient desire to visit his Royal mother put at once to the hazard the labours of years. The affairs of the Deccan embroiled and distracted by the perfidious policy of a Prince, alienated from every duty to his Sovereign and humanity, call now for the most vigorous and powerful interposition on the part of the English. In order to crush these lawless schemes, a large force must be engaged. At this unseasonable juncture, while an enemy is yet in arms, for the English to accept His Majesty's proposal and escort his person to the capital would be neither consulting His Majesty's interest nor that of the English ; it might even endanger the interests of both. When by the blessings of the Almighty and the Sublime auspicious, the Deccan shall be reduced to obedience by the punishment of the Nizam ; when the immoderate power of the Marathas, which is doubtless the natural and a most formidable obstacle to the establishment of the Empire, shall be brought to acknowledge some limits ; when tranquillity shall have disposed the times to favour so distant an expedition, it may then be in the power of the English, with the permission of their own Sovereign and the consent of the Power, to labour as zealously in obtaining the object of His Majesty's Glory as to the present hour they have laboured in all others. Before such a change happens, for His Majesty to hazard His Sacred Person amidst a crowd of self-interested and disaffected Umaras, subservient to no laws but those of ambition and bound by no ties but the personal gratification thereof, can surely open no prospect of advantage but should

rather suggest a thousand causes of apprehension. The inquietude which His Majesty suffers through the intrigues of certain followers of His Court afflicts him with concern. The addressee, whom the writer considers the Key, as it were, of the Royal Cabinet, His Majesty's confidant and the intermediary of the affairs of the government, must be best acquainted with the state of affairs of the Presence, and so great is the confidence the writer reposes in his prudence and ability, his zeal for His Majesty that he does not doubt the addressee's readiness to disclose every circumstance in the clearest light. Has the satisfaction to assure His Majesty that the remittances of His Royal tribute are now established on a plan by which the payment will be regular without deficiencies. The paper of agreement which His Majesty transmitted by the addressee's hands that it might be confirmed by the writer's seal and signature was not known to the writer before. Seeing that the writer's attachment to the Throne falls nothing short of that experienced by His Majesty from Lord Clive and that the faith of the English Nation is inviolable, the writer has affixed his seal and signature to the agreement in obedience to the Sublime Mandate." There was another interesting matter in which, at the instigation of Shuja-ud-Dowlah, the English had asked Munir-ud-Dowlah to help them. It pertained to the procuring of a Sanad from Shah Alam for the Subedarship of the Deccan, leaving the name of the person "blank in the Sanad," so that, "when the time came the name of the most suitable may be inserted." Needless to say that this request of the English⁹ was also carried out by Shah Alam, placed as he was in their hands. But the defeat of Nazim Ali Khan and the subsequent treaty with the English did not give them the chance of placing a henchman of theirs, like the Nazims of Bengal, on the Gaddi of Hyderabad.

⁹ C. P. C., Vol. II, letters 650, 783 and 790.

W. Franklin¹⁰ has also mentioned the fact of the deputation of Nawab Munir-ud-Dowla and says: "Previous to Shah Alam's departure, his Minister Munir-ud-Dowla, who had already made two journeys into the Deccan, to concert measures with the Maratha Chiefs, was for the last time sent by the King to Calcutta to demand the approbation of the British Government on his intended movement [to Delhi], but here he met with a positive refusal." But here Franklin has made a mistake in mentioning Munir-ud-Dowla as the plenipotentiary who had made "journeys to the Deccan to concert measures with the Maratha Chiefs." As a matter of fact it was Saif-ud-din Muhammad Khan,¹¹ one of the King's Courtiers, who was sent by Shah Alam to bring about an understanding with the Marathas. In fact, Munir-ud-Dowla called away Saif-ud-din Muhammad Khan from the Maratha Court, at the very first opportunity.

10. Franklin's *History of Shah Alam*, pp. 35-6.

11. See *Selections from Peshwa's Daftar*, edited by G. S. Sardesai, Daftar No. 29, letter 89.

The *Shah-Alam-Nama* by Ghulam Ali Khan, p. 115. (MS with Bengal Asiatic Society, Calcutta).

CHAPTER IX

MUNIR-UD-DOWLAH GOES TO CALCUTTA AGAIN

During the war with Nazim Ali Khan, Shuja-ud-Dowlah offered his services to the English and volunteered to help them conquer the Deccan¹ in the name of the Emperor, and writing² to the Governor on the above subject, represented : " If these disputes are likely to be prolonged, it is requested that the writer may be permitted to assemble near the stirrup of His Majesty a body of hundred thousand men belonging to such Sardars as Bejoy Singh, Madhav Singh, the Raja of Bundelkhand and the Afghans and to make diversion by way of Bundelkhand into the Nizam's territory. This is the scheme which the writer instigated by friendship has formed, has night and day been the constant subject of his thoughts. Requests that he may be speedily informed if it meets with the Governor's approbation." The meaning under this offer was both sinister and deep. Shuja-ud-Dowlah's aim was to raise a large army at this moment in order to cow down the Emperor into submission and at the same time annex Bundelkhand, about which he had already asked³ the Governor to write, " out of friendship, an Arzi to the King to grant him immediately a Sanad for Bundelkhand." The removal of the Company's troops from his territories necessitated by the war in the Deccan had given him an opportunity to raise an army, but Colonel Smith, who commanded the Emperor's Army at Allahabad, was filled with misgivings at the Vazir's artillery preparations and he sent³

1. C. P. C., Vol. II, letter 684.

2. *Ibid.*, letter 705.

3. Letters from Colonel R. Smith to the Council, dated 24th November and 11th December 1767.

repeated warnings to the Council in Calcutta hinting at the same time that Shuja-ud-Dowlah was contemplating hostilities against the Company itself. The Governor strongly protested to the Vazir and at last, much against his will, Shuja-ud-Dowlah was forced to reduce his army to a bare minimum, and was made to enter into a fresh treaty with the Company in November 1768.⁴ He also sent his Vakil Imamuddin with Captain Harper to Allahabad to wait on Shah Alam for the recognition of his claims to the Vizarat. But Shah Alam insisted upon Shuja-ud-Dowlah recognizing Munir-ud-Dowlah as his Naib and allowing him to continue in the management of the Royal affairs in conjunction with himself. He drew up two forms of mutual agreements,⁵ insisting on the points mentioned above and sent them to Shuja-ud-Dowlah for signature, but Shuja-ud-Dowlah did not consent to put his signature on the form drawn up by the Emperor and appealed to the English, who having come to a fresh settlement with the Vazir, resolved to help him to establish his prestige and influence in the Royal Court at the expense of Munir-ud-Dowlah. In order to bring pressure upon the Emperor, Shuja-ud-Dowlah suggested⁶ to the Company to stop the payment of the Bengal tribute until he himself was actually invested with the Vizarat. This suggestion was practically accepted by the English, as we find the Emperor constantly complaining at this moment of delay in receiving the tribute. In one of his letters⁷ to the Governor the Emperor complains, that "for seven months no tribute has been paid to the Sahukars notwithstanding the injunctions of the Governor."

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4. Letter from the Council to the Court of Directors, dated 6th January 1769.
 5. C. P. C., Vol. II, letters 1084-7.
 6. Ibid., letter 1185.
 7. Ibid., letter 1286.

Pressed from all sides, and his tribute from the Company virtually stopped, the Emperor saw the futility of his opposition to the Vazir. General Barker was therefore sent to Fyzabad to bring about a reconciliation between the Vazir and the Emperor, whither Shah Alam also accompanied Colonel Smith. Preliminary articles of agreement were drawn⁸ and sealed and signed both by the Emperor and Shuja-ud-Dowlah. The Vazir agreed to march to Delhi and reconquer the territories which had been usurped by rebels such as the Jats and others. He was also requested not to leave the Royal Presence for two years. The Emperor on his side promised to appoint Shuja-ud-Dowlah Minister for life and assigned to him a moiety of all the territories that would be conquered, for his expenses in the Royal service, excepting Khalisa Sharifa and the amount required for His Majesty's personal expenses. In helping Shuja-ud-Dowlah to regain the Vizarat, the English were aiming at full ascendancy over the Emperor, inasmuch as, immediately after the compact of friendship between the two was signed, the Vazir was compelled to make⁹ a separate contract with the English, in which he called "on the Most High God and the Holy Imams to witness that whatever ascendancy he may gain over the Emperor's heart was always to be employed in promoting the welfare and reputation of the English Sardars."

When the above negotiations were going on between the Emperor and Shuja-ud-Dowlah, Munir-ud-Dowlah was away,¹⁰ supervising the administration of the districts of Kora and Kara which he had taken into his own hands after dismissing Mirza Najaf Khan from the post of the Naib Nizamat. When

8. C. P. C., Vol. II, letters 1366-7.

9. Ibid., letter 1368.

10. *Alam Ashob* by Moulvi Khairuddin Husain, p. 116. (MS in private family collection.)

.. C. P. C., Vol. III, letters 169, 170.

on his return he found the tables completely turned against him, he took leave¹¹ of the Emperor nominally to go to Patna in order to attend the nuptials of his son Karim Quli Khan (See Note), but in reality not to return to Court again. It is no wonder that Munir-ud-Dowlah became disgusted with the treatment he had received, but hardly any blame is attached for that to Emperor Shah Alam, inasmuch as the Emperor was practically coerced by the English and Shuja-ud-Dowlah in displacing him from the position that he had hitherto occupied.

The absence of the Nawab from the Court did not improve the administration of the Royal affairs but, on the contrary, deteriorated considerably. Shuja-ud-Dowlah who, according to the agreement entered into with the Emperor, was to have stayed at the Royal Court, did not carry out his obligations. The Emperor felt the absence of Munir-ud-Dowlah very keenly. He, therefore, wrote¹² to the Governor, saying that "in case of Munir-ud-Dowlah not returning to the Court the affairs of the Sublime Sarcar will fall into disorder and the Royal interest will be prejudiced and that Munir-ud-Dowlah should be told to set out for the Royal Presence without delay and make no excuse. Seeing that Munir-ud-Dowlah is a true and upright person, a servant

11. *Ibrat Nama* by Khairuddin Muhammad, p. 295.

(MS with Bengal Asiatic Society, Calcutta)

„ *Ahwal-i-Salat*, p. 203-A (MS in Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library)

Note :—Karim Quli Khan was married to Zinat-un-Nissa Begum, daughter of Nawab Madar-ud-Dowlah and the grand-daughter of Alamgir II, (vide *Imadus-Saadat*, p. 101 -History of Oudh, Lucknow). By this marriage Karim Quli Khan became connected with the Imperial family and the title of Farzand Khan (the son) was conferred on him with the titles of Ziaud-ud-Dowlah, Mubariz-ul-Mulk, Muqarrab-ul-Khaqani, Tahawwar Jung, by the Emperor,

12. C. P. C., Vol. II, letter 1096,

faithfully attached to His Majesty, and a friend and well-wisher of the English Sardars, that there is none like Munir-ud-Dowlah in the Royal Court whom His Majesty might prefer; and that his acceding to the Royal service may be estimated among the gifts of fortune, the speedier this faithful Minister returns to the Court the more will be the satisfaction of His Majesty's Sublime heart." But as the presence of Munir-ud-Dowlah at the Royal Court was not very much conducive to the intrigues of Shuja-ud-Dowlah and incidentally to the designs of the English, the Governor wrote to the Emperor making out that as the Nawab was getting old in age, he had no more desire of serving at the Royal Court. But the Emperor refused to be trifled with and again wrote¹³ to the Governor to the following effect: "If in truth there had been any one in the enlightened Presence like Munir-ud-Dowlah, and worthy of his place, His Majesty would have exalted that person, and by no means have insisted on the Governor sending Munir-ud-Dowlah back to the Presence. Seeing that the aforesaid loyal servant had been long in the Royal Service, is old, experienced, upright and trustworthy and has always given satisfaction to His Majesty's sacred heart, His Majesty repeats his commands to send Munir-ud-Dowlah to the Royal Presence. And seeing that Munir-ud-Dowlah is the vassal of the Royal Will and adherent of the Company and a most steadfast friend of the English Sardars, His Majesty again orders that the Governor should send him with all speed to the Royal Presence, for his return to the Court will be a source of infinite joy to His Majesty's Sublime heart. Will not, till his last breath, take away his protection from Munir-ud-Dowlah who stands unequalled among his servants in allegiance and fidelity to the Throne. The Governor represents that if His Majesty now recalls Munir-ud-Dowlah to the administration of his important

13. Ibid., letter 1109.

offices, he will, by reason of his advanced age and infirmities, grow every day less capable of sustaining them. Replies that it is plain that the Governor has not acquired sufficient knowledge of the talents and abilities of the aforesaid Amir, of his tractability of temper, of his strength of judgment and of his unwearied application which even at his declining age is superior to that of those who have all the advantages of youth. Munir ud-Dowlah is dearer to His Majesty than a brother or an only son. Conjures the Governor by the name of Jesus, the Spirit of God, to regard Munir-ud Dowlah as His Majesty's brother and an inseparable friend, and to send him speedily back to the Royal Presence, an act for which His Majesty will derive inexpressible satisfaction and content, and for which he will even remember the Governor in his prayer as the firmest pillar of the Moghul Throne." In another letter¹⁴ the Emperor wrote that "if Munir-ud-Dowlah persisted in keeping away from the Throne, His Majesty will send his son, Prince Akbar Shah to bring him back." In this strain many letters were despatched by the Emperor, and the Governor seeing the futility of keeping Munir-ud-Dowlah away from the Court, prevailed upon him to return.

14. C. P. C., Vol. II, letter 1145.

CHAPTER X

RETIRES FROM COURT

Munir-ud-Dawlah returned to the Court some time in March 1769 and again assumed the management of the Royal affairs. At this time Shah Alam had received urgent communications from Delhi asking him to proceed to the Capital as it was in danger, on account of the incessant inroads of the Marathas. The Emperor due to these urgent calls once more decided to proceed to Shahjahanabad (Delhi) and requested the English for three battalions of the Company's soldiers to accompany him as it was already agreed by the English in the treaty concluded with Clive. But the English for their own reasons were absolutely against Shah Alam's going to Delhi, and on hearing this resolve of the Emperor the Governor wrote¹ to Munir-ud-Dawlah on the 22nd May 1769 saying : "Understands from the letters of His Majesty and the Vazir that His Majesty has firmly resolved to march towards the Capital. Hoping that perhaps, in consequence of the domestic factions of the rebels (Jats and the Marathas), His Majesty may be enabled to consolidate the Empire with ease. As a little servant and a well-wisher of the August House of Taimur, he writes plainly that the knowledge of such a hasty resolution has come as a great surprise to him. Of the articles of the treaty concluded between His Majesty and the Vazir, one is to the effect that, with the exception of Khalisa Sharifa, half the country that may be conquered by the servants of the Empire was bestowed upon the Vazir ; but it seems to the writer that however fast money may pour into the treasury, it will not be sufficient for the successful termination of this expedition. Moreover, as the rainy season is near at hand, the expense of

1. C. P. C., Vol. II, letter 1383.

the troops will be double and the uncertainty of the weather will prevent the success of the expedition. The addressee is, by the blessing of God, wise and experienced and his loyalty and foresight are indisputable; it is hoped that he will give His Majesty such advice as will best tend to the improvement of the auspicious House of Taimur and to the welfare of His Majesty." He also wrote² to the King: "Has received His Majesty's letter intimating his firm resolve to proceed towards Akbarabad (Agra) and desiring that an English army may accompany him, agreeably to the treaty concluded between him and Lord Clive. Asks His Majesty not to entertain any misgivings in this matter, and assures him that the English Saïdars will not deviate by a hair's breadth from what they have agreed to. Should His Majesty, therefore, definitely decide to proceed to Akbarabad, two battalions of troops will be appointed to accompany his victorious stirrup; but as the journey is long and as disturbances and upheavals are daily taking place in Hindusthan it is hoped that His Majesty will consult his Minister before he undertakes the expedition lest his auspicious Person come to harm from the buffets of adverse times." At the same time pressure was also being brought upon Shuja-ud-Dowlah to force him to side with the Council in dissuading the Emperor from leaving Allahabad. The English foresaw that the moment Shah Alam went out of their influence and fell into the hands of the Marathas, the consequences might prove serious to the ascendancy of their power in India. Munir-ud-Dowlah, who was very much against the Emperor having an alliance with the Marathas considering the unreliability of their promises, and thinking that the English might yet perhaps help Shah Alam in regaining the throne of his ancestors, was at length persuaded that it was more profitable for the King to stay in Allahabad for the moment than to take a hazardous

journey towards Delhi, and advised the Emperor accordingly. This change in the attitude of the Nawab very nearly cost him his life. A conspiracy was set on foot to assassinate him and he was attacked³ by one Hazari Bakht Singh at the very gates of the Palace ; but through the pluck of his retainers, especially Sidi Bilal Muhammad Khan, no harm was done. Ghulam Ali Khan, who was present by the side of the Nawab at that moment, gives⁴ a graphic account of the attack thus : "One day when Munir-ud-Dowlah Bahadur had visited the Court, a Jamadar of the Artillery on account of the instigation of some wicked persons attempted to take his life. When that pillar of the State after having been received in an audience by the King was coming out, this wicked person accosted him, with a personal supplication and having found the Nawab attentive towards him went nearer and suddenly catching that great Noble by the collar/whipped out a shining Jamdhar (dagger) and tried to plunge it in the Nawab's heart. This sinner (Ghulam Ali Khan), who had the honour of friendship with that pillar of the State and was accompanying him at that moment quickly warded off the blow with a 'bund of Kushi' (wrestling tactic) and Sidi Bilal Muhammad Khan gave such a blow of dagger on his chest that blood began to spurt from his body and with another two blows from his sword killed him on the spot. At this moment a hue and cry was raised and a few of the supporters of the wicked Jamadar who had also made an attack were soon despatched to the burning fires of hell. As this impossible and unheard of

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3. Introductory Notes to Vol. II, C. P. C., Vol. III, page No. xviii
Ibrat-Nama by Moulvi Khairuddin Muhammad, p. 297 (with
Bengal Asiatic Society.)
 4. *Shah Alam Nama*, pp. 112-4 (MS with Bengal Asiatic Society,
Calcutta.)

incident took place at the very gates of the Royal Palace, Captain Amru with a battalion hurried to protect the Royal household and from the side of Munir-ud-Dowlah his adherents and men gathered around and became ready against any further development. In the meantime the whole military force with the artillery, etc. reached the Palace gates. It was very near that a general fight may ensue, when His Majesty sent Mirza Raja Ram Nath and having called Munir-ud-Dowlah to his Presence made him the object of much kindness, felicitation and honour and having ordered General Barker to make inquiries into the above incident asked him to accompany the Nawab to his house in order that no further untoward incident may take place. After the above incident, becoming disgusted with the activities of some of the mischief-makers, the aforesaid Bahadur submitted his resignation and when taking leave of His Majesty in company of General Barker, being an honest and upright noble, submitted a full account of the two crores of rupees that had been spent by him for the expenses of the Emperor's household, etc. and the upkeep of his army. The Emperor accepting the account as correct signed and sealed it. Munir-ud-Dowlah then left for Azimabad [Patna]." The Emperor, it appears, reluctantly granted him leave to depart. In his letter ⁵ to the Governor, dated 4th July 1769, the Nawab writes: "Understands what the Governor writes concerning the King's expedition to the Capital. His Excellency's observations thereon are all just and judicious. To undertake such a great expedition with so much haste is contrary to the principles of wise and great. The writer did not take part in the deliberations concerning this expedition. Whatever the King and the Vazir said, the writer agreed to without interposition. In his former letter to the Governor, the writer represented that as he had grown too old and weak

5. C. P. C., Vol. II, letter 1462.

to carry on his duties, he had determined to quit the Royal Service, and to spend the few days that were left to him in meditating upon God and praying for the prosperity of His Majesty. Accordingly, on the last day of the month of Muharrum, His Majesty, after conferring upon him his own Royal dress [an honour rarely conferred upon a subject] and some jewels, gave him leave to depart. Colonel Smith who was present at the time, has probably informed the Governor, of this. The writer left Allahabad the next day and arrived at Benares, where he intends to stay for four or five days, and afterwards intends to go to Patna and after visiting the Governor in Calcutta he is fully resolved to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Places."

CHAPTER XI

RECALLED

Munir-ud-Dowlah, who was determined to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Places reached Calcutta early in August 1769 in order to take leave of the Governor, but had to stay there for a considerable time as the necessary permission from the Emperor was not forthcoming. Affairs in the Royal Court at Allahabad in the absence of the Nawab were going from bad to worse. Shah Alam was completely in the hands of Fazal Ali Khan and Saifuddin Muhammad Khan, courtiers of low and base mentalities. Failing in their attempt on Munir-ud-Dowlah's life, the intriguers were trying to bring forth charges against the Nawab in his absence, so much so that the Emperor was prevailed upon to depute Fazal Ali Khan, the man who had plotted against the Nawab's life, to Bengal to examine his accounts. When George Verelst, the Governor, came to know about it, he wrote¹ a very strong letter on the point to Shah Alam on the 6th November 1769 in the following strain: "Whenever His Majesty is in danger from the machinations of misguided persons, 'who sell barley but show wheat,' and who further their interests by maligning His Majesty's excellent and loyal servants, it has always been the writer's rule to offer sincere advice to His Majesty. Is glad to say that his representations were occasionally accepted by His Majesty. As the confusion in the affairs of the auspicious House is greater now than it was in the past, if the writer remains silent at this juncture and abandons his former frankness, he will be discredited in the world of loyalty. Among His Majesty's Shuqqahs that have lately arrived, one is particularly surprising. The

1. C. P. C., Vol. II, Letter No. 1688.

facts that in spite of the representations, both oral and written, of the English Chiefs, and the ample experience of men and affairs, gained by His Majesty, designing persons should have succeeded in accusing a Sardar, who has long enjoyed His Majesty's confidence and who is unequalled in the quality of loyalty, of a baseless charge, and in casting to the wind in two or three weeks, his service of years, has caused the writer such surprise that it is impossible to describe it. Had His Majesty pondered over the matter for a moment, he would have lifted the weight from it, and the Royal anger would have descended upon that accursed party. Cannot believe that the said Shuqqah was written or approved of by His Majesty and is sure that it is the work of the enemies of His Majesty's August House, whose design is to expel all capable and honest Umaras from the Paradisaic Court. When His Majesty examines the Farigh-Khatti, bearing the Royal seal and signature, and the account of the tribute money, and when the excellence and uprightness with which all the Royal affairs had been managed have been proved to His Majesty, what will he say to the accusers? Encloses several papers signed and sealed by Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah and the writer himself. A perusal of these papers will fully disclose to His Majesty the evil designs of the mischief-makers. When the writer sees the Royal favours bestowed upon the undeserving who have neither loyalty in their hearts nor strength in their hands, his heart burns (with indignation), and he asks himself, when these persons resort to such low tactics to bring about the downfall of His Majesty's well-wishers, what is to prevent them from laying their hands on the Throne in the case of a higher stake? By the blessings of God His Majesty possesses sufficient insight and foresight to enable him to get at the root of things. Let no one say that His Majesty allows the wicked to escape punishment and is not master of his own affairs. In one of

the Shuqqahs His Majesty says that in future he will employ high-minded Umaras to serve in the Presence. Represents that as long as low and poverty-stricken persons remain at the Court, no honest and capable Chief will risk his honour and reputation by joining it. That is why His Majesty's old well-wishers are holding aloof and living in retirement. The sum and substance of the writer's representation is this: It is fourteen years since Munir-ud-Dowlah has been engaged in the Royal service. If it is a question of his loyalty and capability, His Majesty himself knows that since his appointment as manager of the Royal affairs, they have improved greatly. If it is a question of his honesty, the accounts are ready. And lastly if it is a question of relations with the English, few people could equal him in his loyalty to the Company and friendship for the English Chiefs. All these virtues instead of bringing him any good, aroused the opposition of his enemies to such a pitch that they conspired to assassinate him, but no one was punished for this. His Majesty may see for himself, that when neither honour nor life is secure against the intrigues of the wicked, it is impossible for His Majesty's sincere well-wishers to dare devote themselves to His Service. The justice which is not denied to the meanest of his subjects has been denied to one of the best and ablest Ministers, notwithstanding that the attempt on his life was made at the gate of the Palace, under the eyes of His Majesty. It is manifest to the whole world that the English Sardars exercise great caution in entering into friendship; but once it has been established, they remain firm in it. God knows what ideas have entered His Majesty's mind. The English Sardars are convinced that Munir-ud-Dowlah is deserving of the Royal favour and protection for his sincerity and loyalty to the House of Taimur, if for no other reason."

This forceful letter had a sobering effect and Shah Alam

in order to appease the Governor sent him a Khil'at; but again he blundered by sending it through Fazal Ali Khan, a sworn enemy of Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah. The Governor refused to accept the Khil'at on the plea that it was not sent through the Vazir, and wrote² to the Emperor saying: "Sometime ago the writer represented to his Majesty with great frankness that certain designing persons of the Court were, from selfish motives, trying their best to wreck the management of the Auspicious Household, and to alienate His Sacred mind from his trusty servants. Recent events have only served to corroborate his views. A few days ago a person named Fazal Ali Khan arrived here with Khil'ats from His Majesty. Although His Majesty informed the writer of his coming, yet as there was no mention of the fact in the Vazir's letter, and as the state of affairs at the Court is somewhat uncertain, the writer thought it advisable, before seeing the man, to ascertain his name and mission, and thus to guard himself against imposture. After inquiry, he has learnt that Fazal Ali Khan is the man who not only took part but was the leader in the attempt made on Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah's life at the Palace gates; and that after having used violence to expel Munir-ud-Dowlah from the Court, he has now resorted to intrigue. This is evident from the Shuqqah bearing the Royal Seal, for while the Shuqqah is full of complaints of Munir-ud-Dowlah it mentions the subject of Khil'ats only casually." The Governor further pressed Shah Alam either to recall Munir-ud-Dowlah or entrust the management of the Royal Household in capable hands. It appears that Shuja-ud-Dowlah also was not happy at the turn in the affairs of the Royal Court at Allahabad and wrote to the Governor to persuade Shah Alam to recall Munir-ud-Dowlah back to Court, to which the Governor replied³ saying: "It is true that

2. C. P. C., Vol II, Letter No. 1687.

3. C. P. C., Vol. II, letter 1691.

Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah is a steadfast well-wisher of the House of Taimur and is deserving of all the Royal bounties, but he intends to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Shrines and spend the rest of his life in prayer and meditation." But soon afterwards, on account of important complications⁴ the Governor had to write pressing letters to Shah Alam to recall Munir-ud-Dowlah back to the Court and at the same time request Munir-ud-Dowlah to take over the management of the Royal affairs again into his hands. From Northern India ominous news had come which seemed to threaten the union between the Emperor, the Vazir and the Company. Madhav Rao Peshwa had gathered a large Maratha Army and was marching northwards, intending to reconquer the districts lost after the Battle of Panipat, especially the Doab. That was not all; the Council had learnt that the Nawab Mir Qasim was trying to unite the Marathas and the other Chiefs of Hindusthan in a league to attack the English. Rohillas had promised him help and the Sikhs were also not averse to helping him. He had assembled a following of about fifteen thousand horses and foot. The English, seeing this new danger, had become alert and were preparing to meet the emergencies. They had sought the friendship of the Raja of Bundelkhand and were trying to win over Janoji Bhonsle of Nagpur also. But the only thing lacking was: "If no point was to be left unguarded, they must have an influential friend at the Court at Allahabad." Munir-ud-Dowlah was the only man at that moment who could frustrate the intrigues but the Nawab had retired and had no intention of going back to the Court again. Therefore a great pressure was brought on Shah Alam to recall him. But the Emperor would not at once consent to welcome a Minister who had left him, even when recommended by the Company

4. Introductory Notes to Vol. III to the C. P. C., Vol. II, page xxiv.

at Calcutta. However, the means of enforcing their will on the Emperor were ready at hand and there began to be unaccountable delays in paying the Bengal tribute. Shah Alam sent repeated remonstrances but not a rupee did he receive for eleven months since Munir-ud-Dowlah had left Allahabad. Out of the stipulated sum of rupees twenty-six lakhs, rupees four lakhs and seventy-five thousand only had been paid during the year. Each remonstrance had brought only fresh excuses. Once again the Emperor was compelled to yield, and on the 9th June 1770 wrote⁵ to John Cartier, who had assumed the office of the Governor of Bengal on the retirement of George Verelst, to the effect that "as the Governor has written so many letters in favour of Munir-ud-Dowlah and as Shuja-ud-Dowlah also has interceded for him, His Majesty, being loth to disappoint those worthy servants of the throne, has commanded Munir-ud-Dowlah to return to the Court. Although His Majesty greatly loved that faithful servant and has still a great affection for him, yet His Majesty could not help being displeased with him for leaving the Court without his permission. However, he has now forgiven him. Can never forget the services which he has rendered to His Majesty. Desires the Governor to send him to Allahabad with the utmost speed and to assure him of His Majesty's protection." After receiving the above letter the Governor wrote⁶ to Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah to the following effect :—"His Majesty has, through the interposition of the English Sardars, graciously recalled the addressee to the Court. Has repeatedly told the addressee that he is at liberty to act as he likes in the matter, but has not yet intimated his decision to the writer. The opinion of the English Sardars is that if the addressee goes back to the Court and remains there, the sun of the friendship that exists between him and

5. C. P. C., Vol. III, letter 248.

6. *Ibid*, 1. 349.

the English will shine more brightly. For the rest, he is master of his will." There was no option left to the Nawab; and much against his will he decided to return to the Court again, and in reply to the Governor's letter wrote ⁷ :—"Has received the Governor's letter. It is evident that His Excellency has made repeated representations to His Majesty on behalf of the writer, and that His Majesty has consequently summoned him to the Court; is living in peace and tranquillity; but, however, if in the Governor's opinion, the writer's returning to the Court is necessary for the lasting interest of the Company and for the satisfactory adjustment of the Royal affairs, he is ready to proceed to Allahabad but on condition that General Barkar may be directed to protect him from his enemies at the Court." On receiving the intimation from the Governor that Munir-ud-Dowla was willing to go back to the Court, the Emperor sent Khil'ats for the Nawab, at Calcutta. Munir-ud-Dowla left Calcutta for Allahabad on 10th November 1770 and intimating his departure, the Governor wrote ⁸ to the Emperor to the effect that "His Majesty's old and faithful Minister in obedience to his commands left Calcutta and will shortly have the honour of kissing the Royal threshold. The thought of many favours which His Majesty has done is engraved on his heart; and he will therefore devote himself heart and soul to His Majesty's service. The friendship between him and the English Sardars is sincere and that his honour and interest are the same as those of the English. Consequently the favours which His Majesty will show to him will be regarded by them as if they were shown to themselves. Munir-ud-Dowla's long residence in Calcutta has enabled him to learn thoroughly the sentiments of the English Sardars. Those sentiments he will communicate verbally to His Majesty. Is sure that

7. C. P. C., Vol. III, letter 358.

8. *Ibid*, I. 408.

through the wisdom and experience of Munir-ud-Dowlah, His Majesty's affairs will be satisfactorily settled."

The only reason for Munir-ud-Dowlah to retire from Shah Alam's Court was the Emperor's desire, at the instigation of interested persons, to make an alliance with the Marathas, on which the Nawab held very strong views. Knowing as he did the Marathas, he was very much against the Emperor having anything to do with them; because, he knew only too well that such an alliance would have a disastrous effect upon the Moghul Throne.⁹ And writing to the Governor from his camp at Dinapore on his way to Allahabad, he stressed this very point in the following words:—"Does not think it advisable for His Majesty to set out for Delhi at the present moment, for if he should once fall into the hands of the Marathas, it would be but the forerunner of far more overwhelming calamities." (A prophecy which came tragically true in the end.) And again from Benares on 19th December 1770 he wrote¹⁰ :—"His Majesty will shortly send Saifuddin Muhammad Khan from His Sacred Presence to negotiate with the Maratha Sardars. His Majesty is intent upon setting out for the Capital on the arrival of the writer in His Sublime Presence. Will acquaint the Governor with full particulars of His Majesty's intention. Hopes that in consequence of his representation His Majesty may postpone his march to the Capital this year." However, the Nawab arrived in Allahabad, after more than a year's absence from the Court, on the 26th December 1770,¹¹ and "on the 27th attended the Royal Presence in company with His Royal Highness Prince Mirza Akbar Shah, when His Majesty conferred honours" on him. For some time after his arrival the Nawab was reluctant to take over the

9. C. P. C., Vol. III, letter 508.

10. *Ibid.*, I, 511.

11. *Ibid.*, I, 548.

management of the Royal affairs in his hands but pressed by the Emperor, he submitted to the Royal commands and wrote¹² to the Governor :—"His Majesty repeatedly pressed him and directed him to transact the business of the Royal Sarcar ; but keeping in view the bad times and the disordered state of the Royal House, he would not consent to it. On Monday the 4th February 1771, His Majesty out of his unlimited bounty was pleased to honour him with Khil'at, jewels, elephant, horse, etc. and to appoint him Manager of the Royal House as before." Shah Alam also intimated¹³ to the Governor that "notwithstanding the remonstrances of Munir-ud-Dowlah, His Majesty has appointed him to manage the affairs of the Empire and the business of the Royal House."

12. C.;P. C., Vol. III., letter 617.

13. *Ibid.*, I. 619.

CHAPTER XII

MAKES A NEW PLAN

(1) Najib-ud-Dowla before his death had opened¹ negotiations with Visaji Pandit, Commander-in-Chief of the Maratha Army, in order to bring about an understanding with the Marathas. He had hoped that by an alliance with them he would be able to restore to the Emperor the Throne of Delhi, and for that reason had approached Zinat Mahal, the Queen Mother, to urge the Emperor to leave the protection of the British and move his standard towards Agra. He had also persuaded Mirza Jawan Bakht, the Emperor's son stationed at Delhi, to join the Marathas in subjugating Naval Singh (the Jat Ruler). In this alliance the Marathas had also admitted Ghazi-ud-din Khan who saw in their success the possibility of retrieving his own fortune. But as Shah Alam could not leave Allahabad against the wishes of the English during the lifetime of Najib-ud-Dowla, the plan designed by him could not bear any fruit. So long as he was alive he had been successful in keeping off the Marathas from the Capital, and by uniting with the Rohillas in a common policy had stayed off destruction of his country. But his death was the signal for the Marathas to stir again. One party marched to Delhi and opened negotiations with Zabita Khan; another began to ravage certain districts of Ahmad Khan Bangash's territory up to the frontier of the Vazier's dominion, capturing Etawa, the Capital of Hafiz Rahmat Khan's dominions. The rapid progress made at this time by the Marathas so much frightened the Emperor and Shuja-ud-Dowla that they sent their Vakils to them. The Marathas invited Shah Alam for an alliance to Delhi, but the

(1) Introductory Notes to C P. C., Vol. III, p. xxvi; and also Franklin's *History of the Reign of Shah Alam*, p. 56.

Emperor was in a great fix; he could hardly trust the Marathas inasmuch as they were in alliance with his bitterest enemy Ghazi-ud-din Khan, the murderer of his father, Alamgir II; at the same time he could hardly refuse their invitation to march to Delhi as they were threatening to place some one else on the Throne. Their plan was, in the first place, to get the Emperor in their clutches; then summon the Chiefs of Hindusthan in his name to submit to their authority and to punish all those who refused to obey it. But there were two parties in their camp, one headed by Tukaji Holkar and Ramchandra Ganesh and the other by Mahadji Scindhia and Visaji Pandit. The latter party had enmity with Zabita Khan and the Vazier. Shah Alam after weighing all these eventualities decided to march to Delhi. In the meantime the Rohillas, perturbed by the invasion of their territory by the Marathas, opened negotiations with them. Ghazi-ud-din Khan who was anxious from personal motives to engage the co-operation of the Rohillas, tried his best to bring about a settlement between the parties. The Marathas agreed to withdraw their forces from Etawa, Shaikhabad and Kanouj on receipt of a sum of twenty lakhs of rupees payable within three years. Both the parties swore to the agreement. Ramchandra Ganesh and Mahadji Scindhia were satisfied, but Tukaji Holkar who had a personal enmity with Ghazi-ud-din Khan disagreed and thus impeded the settlement.

Such was the state of affairs when Munir-ud-Dowlah arrived² at the Royal Court at Allahabad. Realizing the danger of the Maratha invasion he wrote³ to the Governor on the 19th January 1771, requesting him to depute General Barkar to the Emperor in order to bring about a plan to frustrate the Maratha designs on the Royal territories. And at the same time he represented to the Emperor the danger of

2. C. P. C., Vol. III., letter 562.

3. *Ibid.*, I. 625.

throwing himself into the arms of the Marathas at that critical period, and succeeded in dissuading him from taking that fatal step for some time at least. Writing⁴ to the Governor he says: "Has represented to His Majesty the faithlessness of the Marathas. His Majesty duly weighed the writer's representations and read His Excellency's Arzi three or four times over and has postponed his resolution of marching to the Capital. Has informed the Governor in his letter that Bahadur Ali Khan and Saifuddin Muhammad Khan have been recalled from the Maratha camp. Says that as soon as it was known that His Majesty would not proceed to Delhi, discord broke out among the Maratha Sardars. Tukaji has sided with Ramchandra Ganesh. Mahadji Scindhia and Visaji Pandit are inseparables. They are in enmity with Zabita Khan and the Vazier, and are far from being obedient to His Majesty. It was on this account that they did not settle the terms of peace with Ahmad Khan and the Rohillas but returned to Coole. Mahadji Scindhia and the other Maratha Sardars have sent for Ghazi-ud-din Khan and propose to advance to the Capital and place another king on the Throne. They also propose to appoint Ghazi-ud-din Khan-Vazier, and Ahmad Khan, Bakhshi of the Empire, and then to unite together and settle the affairs of Hindusthan. His Majesty has suspended his Royal resolution of marching to the Capital agreeably to the representations of the writer. If the Marathas carry out their designs, it will be a great catastrophe and will reflect very badly on the conduct of the Vazier and the English Sardars, and occasion His Majesty's displeasure with the writer. Since, by the blessing of God, the Governor is endowed with wisdom, penetration, foresight and a keen discrimination, he requests him to communicate without delay his advice and opinion on the present crisis, so that he may act accordingly. There is an old saying that

4. Introduction to Vol. III, C. P. C., p. xxvii.

'Prevention is better than cure'." Munir-ud-Dowlah's plan was to make an alliance with the Rohillas and attack the Marathas with the combined forces of the Emperor and the English; because he knew that the Rohillas without a leader could not take any common action. For that purpose he persuaded the Governor to send General Barkar and convene a conference with the Vazier. Accordingly the Vazier, General Barkar and Munir-ud-Dowlah met in a conference at Benares on the 11th February 1771 where it was decided that Shuja-ud-Dowlah should enter into a speedy alliance with the Rohillas and the Jats and a combined army should march against the Marathas. General Barkar writing⁵ to the King on the 16th February 1771 informed him of the plan decided at Benares and said that "Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah and Ellich Khan will have the honour to represent to His Majesty the means agreed upon in consultation with Nawab Shuja-ud-Dowlah. Hopes His Majesty will listen to their sound and loyal advice." Shuja-ud-Dowlah also on his return from Benares wrote⁶ to the Governor on the 22nd February 1771 saying:—"Arrived at Benares on the 11th February and held a conference with General Barkar on political affairs. What has happened up to now is this :—"The Marathas, leaving unsettled the terms of peace with the Rohillas, have gone towards Shahjahanabad. Saifuddin Muhammad Khan who is with the Marathas representing His Majesty, is responsible for this move of theirs. The opposing party, Ramchandra Ganesh, Mahadji Scindhia and Visaji Pandit, have sent for Ghazi-ud-din Khan and Qasim Ali Khan. They have resolved to proceed to Shahjahanabad and place another King on the Throne. Zabita Khan is not yet a party to the league. Tukaji Holkar, to all appearances, depends in all his undertakings on Zabita Khan. Great disturbances are on foot, and the Marathas

5. C. P. C., Vol. III, letter 616.

6. *Ibid.*; I. 630.

entertain evil intentions. It is evident that as soon as they appoint another King, two difficulties must present themselves. First, they will subjugate the countries in that quarter (Shahjahanabad), collect forces and draw the Sardars of Hindusthan to their side. Secondly, they will plan to attack the writer and the English. If the Marathas appoint another King either with the consent of His Majesty, Shah Alam, or of their own accord, it will be a great misfortune. If, therefore, the writer and the English Sardars do not offer any opposition, what will the world think of them? Although very little time is left, yet he hopes that even now it may not be too late to crush the Marathas. Advises the Governor to join forces with him and hopes to bring all the affairs of Hindusthan to a satisfactory conclusion." Munir-ud-Dowlah returned after this conference to Allahabad and wrote⁷ to the Governor on the 11th March 1771 saying that "the King would approve of all the suggestions of the Governor, and the plans for opposing the Marathas shall be carried out." The Emperor also in his letter⁸ to the Governor, dated 12th March 1771, approving the plan decided at Benares, wrote :—"Pleased that His Excellency has learned from the General's letters of the plan they have decided to adopt after having met at Benares. God grant that the Vazier may be firm and immovable in his engagements. The Marathas have plundered the Capital and taken into their custody the members of the Royal House of Taimur. God knows the anxiety of His Majesty's mind which passes all description. If this is not the proper time for opposing the Marathas, when is it ever to come? His Majesty's hopes are centred on the troops of the Governor. The faithless Marathas, having left unsettled the terms of peace with Ahmad Khan and the Rohillas, set out for Shahjahanabad and took possession

7. C. P. C., Vol. III, letter 659.

8. *Ibid*, 1. 663.

of the Fort and the City with His Majesty's mother, children and members of the Royal House of Taimur, and demanded some lakhs of rupees from His Majesty's mother. They have removed the Amils appointed by Najib-ud-Dowla and have stationed their own men in their places, and are making the bandobast of the City. This disgraceful deed of the Marathas has mortified His Majesty, who can hardly bear to contemplate the catastrophe of his family falling into the hands of his enemies. He remains at Allahabad dependent on the assistance and loyalty of the English Sardars. When the Marathas having taken possession of the Fort of Etawa set out for Farrukhabad and confronted Ahmad Khan and the Rohillas, His Majesty wrote repeated Shuqqas to the Vazier directing him to come quickly to the Sublime Presence so that along with him he might join the Rohilla Sardars with a large body of men and suppress the Marathas. Is sorry that at time the Vazier did not come and carry out the Mandates of the Presence. God grant that he may now be found faithful to his engagements and attend upon His Majesty in his expedition to the Capital. Trusting in God, His Majesty will set out for the Capital and extricate his children and family from the hands of the faithless Marathas. Requests the Governor, agreeably to the engagements of Lord Clive and Mr. Verelst, to send express orders to General Barkar to detail two battalions of the English troops and join the two battalions of the Royal Sarcar." But Shuja-ud-Dowla had not the least intention of making an alliance with the Rohillas and help Shah Alam in frustrating the designs of the Marathas. As a matter of fact, instead of helping the league against the Marathas as adumbrated by Munir-ud-Dowla, General Barkar and himself in a conference at Benares, and with all the professions of anxiety and seeming readiness, he was secretly trying to come to terms with the Marathas, as

would appear from a letter written⁹ by General Barkar to him dated the 10th March 1771, in which the General had opined that "as desired by the addressee the writer is trying to obtain the Royal Shuqqas in the names of the Maratha Sardars on the lines indicated by him. Is doubtful if they can serve any useful purpose. The Marathas do as they like and pay no need to the commands of the King. A letter from His Excellency will therefore be more effective than one from His Majesty. The writer will use his best endeavours to obtain the Shuqqas asked for. His Excellency should not hesitate to carry out the plan decided upon, even if His Majesty does not write the Shuqqas desired of him. When an alliance is made between His Excellency and the Rohillas with the approval of the English Sardars, the Marathas will never march upon the Rohilla countries. Desires His Excellency to exert himself in order to give a practical form to the plan worked out at Benares and make it a success. If this is done, His Majesty will not join the Marathas nor will the latter dare to seize the King. But if, on the contrary, time is wasted in writing letters and expecting replies, the King will slip out of our hands and it will be hardly possible to get him back again. The writer will leave for Allahabad shortly in order to dissuade His Majesty from marching to the Capital. Captain Harper writes that His Excellency proposes to pay five lakhs of rupees to the Marathas in case they withdraw from the Capital. If the rumour of Madhav Rao's death be correct, the Marathas will leave the Capital themselves and a sum of five lakhs will be saved." It appears that the English were sincere in carrying out the line of action decided at Benares inasmuch as we find John Cartier, the Governor of Bengal, writing¹⁰ to Shuja-ud-Dowlah on the 17th March 1771 to the following effect :—

9. C. P. C., Vol. III, letter 658.

10. *Ibid.*, I. 669.

"General Barkar has informed him of all that had happened at the conference between him, Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah and His Excellency. May God grant the Rohillas success and preserve the honour and dignity of the Royal House! His Excellency commands a very disciplined and experienced force; if he gives battle to the Marathas, it will certainly end in disaster for them. Is confident that Zabita Khan, Hafiz Rahmat Khan and Ahmad Khan will, in their interests, combine against the Marathas and side with His Excellency. The Jats too will not remain inactive, when they see how much their country has suffered at the hands of the Marathas. The English Sardars will always remain firm in their promise and the security of His Excellency's family as well as his country will remain the first object of their attention." But Shuja-ud-Dowlah did not move, which left the Marathas free to do whatever they liked. The Vazier was exceedingly jealous of the Rohilla confederation and had been scheming for a long time to annex their country even by force of arms if any plausible excuse was forthcoming, which eventually did happen afterwards when he invaded the Rohillas with the help of the English and subjected their country to ruthless onslaught; therefore, it was out of question for Shuja-ud-Dowlah to enter into an alliance with the Rohillas. The plan decided upon at Benares did not fructify for two reasons. First, on account of sheer apathy on the part of the East India Company, and, secondly, Shuja-ud-Dowlah's jealousy of the Rohillas.

Emperor Shah Alam, after waiting for the help from the Vazier and the English, which never came, determined to march alone to Delhi in order to release his mother and children from the hands of the Marathas.

The English, on finding that the Emperor was determined to march to Delhi suggested that at least two Princes may be left behind under their protection as a token of Royal

confidence in the East India Company, but in reality to retain a hold on the Emperor; as we find General Barkar writing¹¹ to the Emperor in his letter dated 8th April 1771, to the effect that "Has just received the letter from the Sardars at Calcutta. They are greatly surprised to hear His Majesty's intention to go over to the Marathas after having approved the plan decided at Benares in his Shuqqa to the writer, a copy of which was also forwarded to the English Sardars. It is all the more surprising that, while His Majesty was writing the Shuqqa, he was meditating an alliance with the Marathas. This act on the part of His Majesty displays lack of confidence in his loyal servants, the English Sardars. His Majesty did not even consult them on certain important subjects but on the contrary said that it was advisable to march to the Capital in the company of the Vazier. The Vazier being of the same opinion, tried to seek the co-operation of the Afghans and the Rohillas but could not succeed. Since His Majesty had arranged all this with the Maratha Sardars secretly the writer has received instructions from the English Sardars neither to stand in the way of the Royal resolution nor to support it; with all this they are ever ready to safeguard the Royal Presence, property and territory in order to prove that they are not wanting in loyalty and obedience, which they have shown during the past seven years. After receiving such a letter it is beyond the power of the writer to accompany His Majesty to Kora. If His Majesty can leave the Princes with the English at Allahabad, it will be sufficient proof of the Royal confidence in them in order to convince the Nobles and people of Hindusthan."

But who would blame Shah Alam for taking the step that he did? Delhi was occupied by the Marathas, and his aged mother and children practically prisoners in their hands. He had repeatedly postponed his departure on the advice of

11. C. P. C., Vol. III, letter 698.

the English who had promised to lend him sufficient force in case he determined to march to Delhi—but all promises had proved futile. As a matter of fact, the English had no intention of helping Shah Alam in his march to the Capital. He was all along being utilized as a mere tool by them for their own advancement. Though the Emperor was bereft of all powers, the glamour of Royalty was still there and much could be brought about with the magic of the Royal Seal. Shah Alam away at Delhi would have been a loss to the English which they could not contemplate with ease. Shuja-ud-Dowlah, so long as the Maratha menace was nearer his territory, professed every anxiety and submitted to all the plans; but the moment he found that the centre of the Maratha attack had shifted to Delhi he conveniently ignored his responsibilities.

However, Shah Alam left Allahabad on his fateful march to Delhi on 9th April 1771 accompanied by an Army headed by the Vazier's son, Saadat Ali Khan. Munir-ud-Dowlah was ready to accompany him but he was kept back from doing so by the English, as appears from a letter written¹² by General Barkar to the Nawab on 14th March 1771: "Has heard from a private source that His Majesty has decided to march to Delhi and that active preparations are being made for the purpose. He is surprised to learn that the addressee has promised to provide His Majesty with nine lakhs of rupees on his entering Kora. His Majesty's march to the Capital and the addressee's accompanying him will surely occasion the displeasure of the English Sardars and serious trouble can be apprehended in the future."

On the face of this threatening letter how could it have been possible for the Nawab to accompany Shah Alam? Munir-ud-Dowlah had made his home in Patna, where his

12. C. P. C., Vol. III, letter 666.

family and children were residing, at the behest of the English, and one of his Al-Tamghas (Fifes) grant was also situated in the Province of Bihar. Therefore, realizing the consequence of breaking with the English at the moment, he remained behind. His son,¹³ Farzand Khan Zia-ud-Dowlah, Karim Quli Khan Bahadur Tahawwur Jung, with a sufficient number of troops and followers accompanied the Emperor but had to return to Allahabad from Benigunj, beyond Farrukhabad, due to a quarrel between the soldiers of Anand Rao, the Vakil of Mahadji Scindhia, and his servants, about the pitching of tents. Anand Rao was accompanied with only five hundred horses and the same number of foots. The followers of Karim Quli Khan who were greater in number fell upon the Marathas, destroyed their tents and wounded Anand Rao badly. When Shah Alam heard about this episode he sent for Anand Rao and in order to appease his anger showed him great kindness. After this episode it was not thought advisable that Karim Quli Khan should accompany Shah Alam. He was ordered to return to Allahabad by the Emperor.

13. *Alam Ashob*, by Moulvi Khair-ud-Din Husain, p. 184 (MS in family collection). Also *The Shah Alam Nama*, by Ghulam Ali Khan, p. 117 (MS with Bengal Asiatic Society).

CHAPTER XIII

GOVERNOR OF KORA AND ALLAHABAD

Before his departure, however, Shah Alam conferred the Nizamat of Kora and Allahabad on Munir-ud-Dowlah as appears from the papers¹ of News dated 18th May 1771 sent by Raja Shitab Rai to the Governor:—"On 2nd May Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah was appointed Nazim of Allahabad and Kora. The Khil'at consisting of a Serpech, a string of pearls, jewels, a sword and an elephant and a horse was conferred on him, and he took leave of His Majesty from Sarai Alamchand." But that the Nawab was not very keen on accepting the Nizamat (he had actually twice refused the offer made by the Emperor) appears from a letter written² by General Barkar to the King touching the subject of the Nizamat on the 1st April 1771 wherein he says:—"The writer is asked to persuade Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah to take charge of Allahabad and Kora, which office he twice refused when offered by His Majesty. Says in reply that Munir-ud-Dowlah is an old and experienced man of good administrative abilities. He will always do what is best for the Empire. It is not, therefore, advisable for the writer to compel him to

1. C. P. C., Vol. III, letter No. 746.

Shah Alam Nama, p. 116 (By Ghulam Ali Khan MSS. Bengal Asiatic Society, Calcutta).

Tarikh-i-Shah Alam, p. 52-A (By Munna Lal; MSS. Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library, Bankipore).

Bahr-ul-Mawwaj, Vol. III, p. 71-B (By Muhammad Ali Khan Ansari), Tarikh-i-A'li, p. 48 (By Muhammad Salesh, known as Qudrat; MSS. Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library, Bankipore). Ahwal-i-Salatin, p. 204-A, anonymous (MSS. Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library, Bankipore). Contd.

2. C. P. C., Vol. III, letter 689.

take up a task which is not acceptable to him." However, perhaps due to greater pressure from Shah Alam, he did reluctantly accept the office, as recorded by the author of *Alam Ashob*³: "Munir-ud-Dowlah took leave of His Majesty from Sarai Alamchand and proceeded towards Allahabad in order to take the management of the affairs of the Nizamat in his own hands as well as to collect enough revenue in order to pay back the loan which Nawab Shuja-ud-Dowlah had advanced to the Emperor at the time of his departure from Allahabad. Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah reached Allahabad and sat on the Nizamat gaddi without any hitch or hindrance."

But from a letter⁴ written subsequently by General Barkar to the Emperor it also appears that Shuja-ud-Dowlah had also an eye on Kora and Allahabad. The General writes: "During the interview with Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah the writer found that His Majesty has ordered the Nawab to proceed to Kora and that the Nawab was going there in five or six days; while Captain Brooke was to escort him with a few companies. It is said that the Vazier has collected men to garrison the Fort of Allahabad, the writer is therefore anxious to know what to write to the Vazier if he wants to know anything about the Fort." But when the question of the actual delivery of the Fort which was garrisoned by the English sepoys was raised the Company temporized and finally refused, which left Munir-ud-Dowlah in the peaceful occupation of the Nizamat.

The Nawab took the management of the province in all earnestness and made great improvements in the administration. Writing⁵ to the Governor in one of his letters he says :

3. *Alam Ashob*, by Moulvi Khairuddin Husain, Vol. III, p. 188 (Family collection).

4. C. P. C., Vol. III, letter 838.

5. *Ibid.*, letter 908.

"Having placed the affairs of Kora on satisfactory footing he came down to Allahabad where the affairs were in great confusion. The reason was that the Zamindars, Taluqdars and farmers had withheld payments of their rents. However, they are now attentive to their liabilities, and the rents are beginning to flow into the treasury."

To quote the author⁶ of *Alam Ashob* who gives a very graphic account of the administration of Kora and Allahabad by the Nawab and his high sense of justice: "He busied himself heart and soul in the management of the Nizamat and established good government, law and order, in a very short time so that people became immune from oppression. He took immediate steps to alleviate the condition of the people and opened relief measures in different centres in order to help the people who were suffering very much on account of the famine that had been raging in that province for nearly six years. He had appointed a special day in the week in order to receive petitions direct from the people. On the prescribed day he used to take his seat early in the morning in the Throne-room and nobody excepting the Qazi was allowed to sit near him. Rich and poor, high and low, all had equal permission to approach him and present their complaints. The Nawab used personally to look into the matter and make enquiries into each and every complaint and afterwards with the concurrence of the Qazi, pass judgement. It is related that one day a sweeper woman complained against the son-in-law of Syed Isa Khan—a highly respected Courtier of the Nawab—to the effect that he had given her a 'shoe-beating. Although Syed Isa Khan was one of the highly respected citizens of Ispahan and came from a very high family and the Nawab used to show him great respect and honour, yet, paying no regard to these connexions,

6. *Alam Ashob*, by Moulvi Khairuddin Hussain, Vol. III, p. 190 (Family collection).

he had the accused brought before him at once and after inquiring into the matter he ordered that the same shoe be made over to the woman and that she should beat the accused with it. Syed Isa Khan who was present in the Court and knew the Nawab to have great regard for him, thinking that perhaps the Nawab was not aware of the relationship which existed between the accused and himself, approached the Nawab and explained to him the relation in which the accused stood with him. The Nawab on hearing it became very angry and remarked that in the claims of justice he made no difference between his own children and the sweepers of the country, and said that if the accused was his own son and had committed the crime, he would have dealt with him in the same manner, further remarking that the respect and regard which he entertained for the Khan was known to everybody, but if he connived at the crime committed by his son-in-law today what reply would he give to his Maker on the Day of Judgement? The Courtiers and others present became simply dumb-founded at this even-handed justice dealt by the Nawab and the sweeper woman cried out that she had received full justice and forgave the accused; but the Nawab replied that although the woman devoid of wisdom had forgiven the accused, but he being afraid of the Day of Judgement could not allow the matter to rest there and passed orders that the accused after being taken round the city as an example to others should be expelled from the province of Allahabad, never to return there again. In a few months' time Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah made such arrangements about the collection of revenue and the establishment of law and order that the people became happy and contented. Shortly afterwards, giving out that he was proceeding towards Shahjahanabad, he went to Kora and punished those who were in the plot of Khwaja Saeed Khan's murder. In a very short time law and

order was established there also and proper arrangements for the collection of revenue were made. As the Vazier was demanding the repayment of his debts to the King, the Nawab sent him some lakhs of rupees with presents, etc., and after appointing Hyder Beg Khan, who was an able officer, to the management of the district of Kora, returned to Allahabad."

Munir-ud-Dowlah also in his letter⁷ to the Governor mentions that "after settling the Bandobast at Kora and satisfying himself that there is every prospect of receiving money from the villages, he left Hyder Beg Khan at Cawnpore to act in his stead with a force of forty-three thousand men and eight pieces of cannon and went to Allahabad to set the Bandobast there in order".

From various accounts available we find that under the administration of Munir-ud-Dowlah, Kora and Allahabad enjoyed an amount of peace, tranquillity and contentment that it had not enjoyed for a long time.

7. C. P. C., Vol. IV, letter 339.

CHAPTER XIV

LOSS OF GOVERNMENT

John Cartier retired sometime in 1772 and his place was taken by Warren Hastings. He was, as is well-known, the last of the Governors and the first of the Governors-General.¹ In April 1772 he took his seat as President of the Council at Fort William. He had a chequered career in India previous to his appointment as Governor-General. He came out as a writer of the Company and served them for seven years, until he was made a prisoner on the capture of Calcutta by Shiraj-ud-Dowlah. He, however, managed to escape and fought against Shiraj-ud-Dowlah in the Battle of Plassey. As soon as Mir Ja'ffar, the ally of the English at Plassey, was raised to the Masnad of Murshidabad, Warren Hastings was appointed a Resident at his Court. In this position he remained for three years and then left for England. After sometime he again evinced a desire to return to India and the Board of Directors sent him to their Council at Madras, and it was from Fort St. George that he was translated as the President to the Council at Fort William.

The dual system of Government in Bengal had not proved very successful; while the Company were collectors of revenue, the Nazim was the Chief Executive Officer under the Moghuls. Therefore, the task which Warren Hastings set for himself soon after his appointment, was to get rid of this anomalous division of functions and take the whole power into his own hands. Up till now the administration of justice, the appointment to offices, in short, whatever came into the purview of civil administration, had remained

1. See M. E. Monckton Jones, *Warren Hastings in Bengal*, Oxford, 1918, p. 63.

in the hands of the Nazim or his Ministers. As a first step towards the wrenching of the executive authority from the hands of the Nazim, he ordered the arrest of Nawab Muhammad Reza Khan, the Naib Nazim, and had him brought to Calcutta to answer several charges of mismanagement and misappropriation, and appointed Raja Gurudas, son of Raja Nandkumar, an inveterate enemy of Muhammad Reza Khan, with a view that he would be helpful in collecting information and documentary evidence to substantiate the charges against the Nawab. For similar reasons Munni Begum, who in prime of her life was a Nautch-girl but had afterwards become a consort of Mir Ja'ffar and mother of Najm-ud-Dowlah, was immediately appointed the Regent of the minor Mubarak-ud-Dowlah in preference to his own mother Bahu Begum. Raja Shitab Rai, the Naib of Patna, was given a similar treatment and brought to Calcutta under arrest. He was, however, honourably acquitted after his trial and reinstated in his position but died broken-hearted shortly afterwards. Muhammad Reza Khan's trial was a protracted affair but he was also finally acquitted and again put in charge of his office of Naib Nazim. In continuation of his efforts to readjust the finances of the Company, Warren Hastings' first step was to withhold the payment of the Royal tribute to the Emperor on the plea that Shah Alam having left the protection of the English had violated the covenants entered into with them. But he could not, however, openly throw off his allegiance to the Emperor who, though bereft of authority and power, still possessed the glamour of Sovereignty. He pleaded the poverty of famine-stricken Bengal as the reason for non-payment of the tribute, but gave repeated assurance to continue the payment as soon as the Province was restored to prosperity, as the following letter² written by him on the 26th November 1772 shows: "Is

2. C. P. C., Vol. IV, letter 92.

honoured by His Majesty's Shuqqa. His Majesty writes that in the days of Lord Clive and Mr Verelst the tribute of Bengal was sent regularly, but from the time Mr Cartier assumed the reins of office, its transmission has been suspended. Submits that during the administrations of Lord Clive and Mr Verelst the country was prosperous, but such is not the case now; the great famine of Bengal has considerably reduced the revenue. Hopes that with the advent of better times, he will be able to resume the transmission to His Majesty of the Bengal tribute. Gratefully acknowledges through Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah the receipt of a Khil'at with Jewels, Serpech and necklace of pearls for himself with more Khil'ats and Jewels, Serpechas for other English Sardars." And also writing ³ to Munir-ud-Dowlah on the same subject he says: "Has received several letters from the Nawab on the subject of His Majesty's commands concerning the Bengal tribute. Says that Nawab has himself seen the effects of the famine that lately ravaged Bengal. Hopes that when there is improvement in the conditions of peasantry and the revenue is normal, arrangements will be made to renew the payments to the King of the tribute of Bengal. Will always be happy to see the Nawab, will himself proceed in a few days in that direction and hopes to have the pleasure of meeting the Nawab." But all these were lame excuses. Warren Hastings had no intention of paying the Bengal tribute to the Emperor. In fact, not a pie did Shah Alam receive of the tribute from Bengal ever afterwards.

On hearing of the Emperor's march to Delhi, the Marathas had delivered 'up the Fort sometime in August 1771 after taking a sum of rupees two lakhs from the Emperor's Agents, and Shah Alam escorted by Mahadji Scindhia from Beni Gunj had entered his Capital during the early part of 1772. But the Emperor soon afterwards found

3. C. P. C., Vol. IV, letter 93.

out that the specious promises made by the Marathas were nothing more than stratagems to bring him into their power. The little liberty of action that he possessed at Allahabad was also gone and he found himself more or less a prisoner in the hands of the wily Marathas. Zabita Khan, son of Najib-ud-Dowlah, had all along been playing a double game. The hated Ghazi-ud-din Khan was also encouraging the Marathas to take more drastic steps in practically compelling the Emperor to do all their biddings. At last, having been exasperated, baffled and tricked, Shah Alam assumed a hostile attitude towards them but was defeated and compelled to have recourse to a treaty. Munir-ud-Dowlah who was well posted with the affairs in the Capital, on learning that the Emperor had foresworn the Province of Kora and Kara to the Marathas, made preparations to defend them, and on the 23rd January 1773 informed Warren Hastings⁴ of the steps that he had taken for the defence of those territories. He wrote: "It is believed that the Maratha Sardars after settling their affairs in the Capital will either proceed towards Farrukhabad and the Vazier's territory or return to the Deccan. Says that he was stationed at Kora with ten thousand horses and foot and eight pieces of cannon but had marched with his troops from there and encamped in Cawnpore on the banks of the Ganges. Is determined to oppose the Marathas and will never retire before them. Considers it desirable with General Barkar that six or seven battalions should immediately be sent to join the Vazier. He possessed sufficient troops and artillery to subdue the Marathas and therefore victory was certain." Shuja-ud-Dowlah⁵ had also asked the Nawab to help him with an army of twenty or twenty-five thousand. But on account of dissensions in their own camp the Maratha menace towards Allahabad did not develop.

4. C. P. C., Vol. IV, letter 144.

5. *Ibid.*, letter 144 (A).

As soon as the Maratha danger had disappeared, Warren Hastings began to interfere with the internal affairs of Kora and Allahabad and wrote⁶ to Munir-ud-Dowlah on the 27th April 1773 to the following effect: "It is desirable to have a sobering influence on the ambitiously inclined Marathas. With this object in view he had put Mr Lawrell, a Member of the Council, in charge of those districts [Kora and Kara]. Requests him his co-operation with him." On receipt of this letter and after the arrival of Lawrell at Kora, Munir-ud-Dowlah replied to Warren Hastings⁷ on the 21st June 1773 in the following way: "Has received his letter stating that Mr Lawrell has been appointed by the Company to regulate the affairs of Kora, that this appointment will cause no change in his [the writer's] executive functions and that he should inform Mr Lawrell of the state of affairs in that district, and act in conjunction with him. Says in reply that he will assist him in every way. With regard to Allahabad, nothing has been stated in his letter. Inquires if it will remain under the King or will come under the control of the Company." Replying to the above query Warren Hastings wrote⁸ to the Nawab saying that "in reply to his enquiry whether Allahabad belongs to the King or to the Company, says that it belongs to the Company in the same way as the Chaklas of Kora and Kara and that Mr Lawrell will conduct the affairs of Allahabad and the two Chaklas".

Thus Warren Hastings not being satisfied with stopping the Royal tribute from Bengal, by one stroke of the pen also annexed the territories left to Shah Alam as his demesne by the treaty of 1765.

6. C. P. C., Vol. 1V, letters 272 & 317.

7. *Ibid.*, letter 379.

8. *Ibid.*, letter 391.

Munir-ud-Dowlah informed Shah Alam of the above state of affairs and the Emperor in his letter⁹ dated 9th September 1773 to Warren Hastings protested against his action in the following words: "Has learnt from Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah that the Governor has sent his own Amils to Allahabad and Kora. Says that according to the treaty of allegiance the English Chiefs are bound to remit to him the Bengal tribute regularly, and to let Kora and Allahabad remain in the hands of his men. Desires him to send the arrears of the tribute from Bengal and to pay it regularly in future. The Governor is also asked to deliver up Kora and Allahabad into the hands of Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah and to have the revenues of these places transmitted to him every month." On receiving the above Shuqqa from the Emperor, Warren Hastings requested him to depute one of his representatives to Benares in order to bring about a settlement of all the outstanding affairs including Kora, and Allahabad where he himself was proceeding for a conference with the Vazier.

9. C. P. C., Vol. IV, letter 506.

CHAPTER XV

LAST DAYS

On receipt of the request from Warren Hastings for a representative to the conference at Benares, the Emperor decided to depute Majd-ud-Dowlah and informed¹ him as follows: "Is sending Nawab Majd-ud-Dowlah Bahram Jung, who will wait upon him in conjunction with Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah. Desires the Governor to form a permanent and solid plan for regulating the affairs. Directs him to defer the conference till the arrival of His Majesty's envoy." Warren Hastings had also sent a separate invitation to Munir-ud-Dowlah to be present at the Conference.

It so happened that Majd-ud-Dowlah², on account of the rising of the Jats, could not undertake the journey to Benares and the Emperor sent another man in his stead with dispatches to the Governor, the Vazier and Munir-ud-Dowlah, requesting the Governor to settle the matter of the tribute of Bengal and the question of Kora and Allahabad according to the treaty of allegiance entered into by the East India Company with the Emperor in 1765.

Munir-ud-Dowlah³ also could not be present at this Conference on account of ill health. But Warren Hastings, soon after arriving at Benares, started negotiations with Shuja-ud-Dowlah, in the absence of both the King's envoy and Munir-ud-Dowlah.

During the last invasion of their territories by the Marathas, the Rohilla Chiefs had appealed to Shuja-ud-Dowlah for military help, which he had promised on their

1. C. P. C., Vol. IV, letter 428.

2. *Ibid.*, letter 459.

3. *Ibid.*, letter 251.

payment of Rupees forty lakhs to him; but the above eventuality did not arise inasmuch as the Marathas, on account of dissensions in their own camp, retired to the Deccan from Farrukhabad. But still Shuja-ud-Dowlah had demanded from the Rohillas the payment of Rupees forty lakhs, and on their refusal had threatened them with war. And in order to carry out his intentions against the Rohillas, he had appealed to the English for help. It was for an understanding on the above point with the Vazier that Warren Hastings, had come to Benares. Warren Hastings, thinking that the strengthening of the frontiers of Oudh would materially add to the strength of the Company's possessions in Bengal, and as Shuja-ud-Dowlah was promising to pay for the whole brigade of the Company's troops and also incidentally promising to get the remission of the Bengal tribute sanctioned by the Emperor, settled terms of accommodation with the Vazier and a treaty was signed in September⁴ 1773 by which Shuja-ud-Dowlah promised to pay Rupees fifty lakhs to the Company after the subjugation of the Rohillas. Warren Hastings thus became a party to a most wanton and a cruel war waged upon a people who had never done any harm to the English. Not only this, but by the same treaty he also concluded the sale of Kora⁵ and Allahabad to the Vazier for a sum of Rupees fifty lakhs, "transactions⁶ severely condemned" by the Board of Directors "who charged him with inhumanity, injustice and disobedience to the orders of the Directors as they had emphatically forbidden all aggressive warfare and had in no ambiguous terms urged the restitution of Kora and Allahabad to the King to whom they of right belonged".

4. Minutes of the Court of Directors on the Rohilla War, Bengal, 1773. Also C. P. C., Vol. IV, letter 500 (Treaty between Nawab Shuja-ud-Dowlah and the Company concluded at Benares). Also see C. A. Aitchison Op. Cit. pp. 95-6.

5. C. P. C., Vol. IV, Letter 500

6. Introductory Note to Vol. IV, C. P. C., p. xv.

Moulvi Khairuddin Husain in his *Alam Ashob*⁷ mentions the sordid affair of the sale of Kora and Allahabad in the following words: "The Governor on account of the machinations of his enemies was not favourably inclined towards Nawab Munir-ud-Dowla and bore him a grudge. After his arrival at Benares he intended to take away the Government of the Provinces of Kora and Allahabad from the Nawab and make it over to Mr Lawrell. When Shuja-ud-Dowla heard about this, he approached Warren Hastings through George Verelst, Captain Harper and others and at last prevailed upon him to make over the countries to him in consideration of Rupees forty lakhs in cash. After the conclusion of the above transaction the Vazier left for Fyzabad and the Governor for Calcutta. Shuja-ud-Dowla afterwards pressed Munir-ud-Dowla very much to accept the Nizamat of Allahabad and Kora at his instance, but the Nawab, bringing out excuses of old age and illness, refused the offer. After the above transaction, Munir-ud-Dowla left Allahabad and stayed for some time in Benares, where burdened with disappointment and grief, he died shortly afterwards." Ghulam Husain Khan in his *Seyer-ul-Mutakhirin*⁸ also mentions: "Munir-ud-Dowla had already made a private treaty with the English by taking from them a lease of the revenues of the Provinces of Kora and Allahabad, that Minister continued in the government of the two provinces of Allahabad and Kora until about one year, when the Governor, Mr Hastings, came to Benares, where he entered into a treaty with Shuja-ud-Dowla, by which this Prince took upon himself the government of the two Provinces; and then Munir-ud-Dowla paid exactly the balance due by him."

7. *Alam Ashob*, Persian Manuscript, Vol. III, p. 195 (Private collection). *Tarikh-i-Muzaffari*, p. 612 (By Muhammad Ali Bin Hidayatullah; Mss. Bengal Asiatic Society).

8. *Seyer-ul-Mutakhirin*, English Translation, Vol. II, pp. 36-7.

But Ghulam Husain Khan is not correct in saying that Munir-ud-Dowlah had taken a lease of the Provinces of Allahabad and Kora by a private treaty with the English, as he is not supported by any historian whatsoever. On the contrary, letters published in the Calendar of Persian Correspondence (Government of India Publication) and Ghulam Ali Khan in his *Shah Alam Nama* and Muhammad Ali Bin Hidayatullah in his *Tarikh-i-Muzaffari* and other historians quoted in this book, clearly mention the fact of the Nawab holding the Provinces of Kora and Allahabad at the behest of Emperor Shah Alam.

However, after making over charge of these Provinces in September 1773, the Nawab wrote⁹ from Allahabad to the Governor saying: "Proposes to leave for Azimabad [Patna] in a few days and to stay there in his own house. Will, however, stay in Benares for the present in order to settle some business. Requests the Governor to let him have the services of a company of sepoys for a month. The pay of this company may be deducted from the balance of the tribute due to the King. Had borrowed a large sum of money from the merchants and paid to the King on account of his expenses before his departure to Delhi, for which a Receipt was granted to him. Will esteem it a great act of friendship if the Governor pays him this money to meet the demands of the merchants." To this letter Warren Hastings replied that he had directed Mr Lawrell to lend him a company of sepoys but "declined to interfere¹⁰ in recovery of the Nawab's money from the King".

In the above reply Warren Hastings entirely camouflaged the issues. The money advanced by the Nawab to the King was not in the nature of a loan to the King, but actually in lieu of the Bengal tribute which under arrange-

9. C. P. C., Vol. IV, letter 499.

10. *Ibid.*, letter 510.

ments with the Company, the Nawab had been advancing from time to time since 1765, that is, from the time of the grant of the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to the Company. There are a number of letters published in the Calendar of Persian Correspondence which go to prove the above arrangements; particularly in his representation to Warren Hastings. Shuja Muhammad Khan, Munir-ud-Dowlah II (Nawab's eldest son) after the death of his father, clearly states:¹¹ "From the time the English Chiefs stipulated with His Majesty at Allahabad for the payment of the tribute from Bengal, my deceased father Munir-ud-Dowlah was appointed to the management of the affairs of the Presence on their behalf. After the interview at Chapra, Lord Clive appointed Captain Ducarell to remain with His Majesty to act agreeably to the advice of my father. As my father's principal study of attention was to give satisfaction to the English Chiefs, he therefore took money from the bankers; from his own house; or wherever he could get it, to pay His Majesty on account of the tribute, and when he had thus supplied him with the amount of ten or fifteen lakhs of rupees he transmitted His Majesty's Receipts for the same to Calcutta and the money was ordered to be reimbursed from the treasury at Murshidabad. The Mursidabad Mutsaddis are well acquainted with this particular; and besides the records of the Khalsa are ready to be referred to. In the tenth year of His Majesty's reign it happened in the common course of things that my father became disgusted with Court intrigues, and came down to Calcutta where he remained for the space of a year. After that Mr Cartier in consequence of some letters which he received from the King and the Vazier told my father that he

11. C. P. C., Vol. IV, letter 1027, and Certified copy supplied by Govt of India, Records Department, Calcutta, vide No. 651, dated 2nd December 1932.

must again go to the Presence, as the satisfaction of the English Chiefs depended upon it. As my father was never averse to the advice of the English Chiefs, he therefore prepared himself for the journey. After my father's arrival again in the Presence he began to support His Majesty with money as formerly; and in the twelfth year of his reign he paid him at Allahabad the sum of Rupees seventeen lakhs twelve thousand. Dachillas for six lakhs of rupees, in part of this amount, were transmitted through General Barkar, of which five lakhs were paid and regarding the odd lakh, the General wrote a letter to you before his departure to Europe. Dachillas for the remaining eleven lakhs twelve thousand rupees were transmitted through Raja Shitab Rai. His Majesty's Ministers, having in my father's absence advised him to make a journey to his Capital of Shahjahanabad, he accordingly set out from Allahabad in the twelfth year of his reign and encamped at the Sarai of Alamchand. The Vazier and General Barkar waited on him there; and the Vazier supplied him with ten lakhs of rupees by way of loan; for which he received Dachillas on his tribute from Bengal. My father's Dachillas had before been transmitted, and after them the Vazier's. However, orders were issued that the Dachillas of both should be paid by Mr Middleton; but the payment was afterwards put off, after Mr Cartier's relinquishing the Government and proceeding to Europe. My father frequently used to borrow money to pay the English Army when they were in want of it. Although General Barkar is gone, Colonel Galliez, Major Hannay and Captain Brooke are present, who are well acquainted with the circumstances. After the King's departure to his Capital, my father remained at Allahabad and as he was not forbidden to pay any more money to His Majesty on account of the Bengal tribute, he used to supply him and execute his commissions whenever he wrote to him, not doubting but it would soon be repaid to him.

In this manner my father remitted to His Majesty, at different times, the amount of seven lakhs forty-five thousand eight hundred and fifty-one and eleven annas; which added to the money he supplied him with before his departure and was not repaid him out of the tribute, makes the sum of Rupees nineteen lakhs fifty-seven thousand eight hundred and fifty-one and eleven annas now due from the Company." But this money was never paid back inasmuch as Warren Hastings made out the advances made by Munir-ud-Dowlah to the Emperor in lieu of the Bengal tribute as a personal loan to Shah Alam; and thus with another stroke of pen, he deprived that Nobleman and his children of about twenty lakhs of rupees. The Nawab left Allahabad and on his way to Patna stopped at Benares from where he wrote¹³ to the Governor to the following effect: "Reports that his health continues to be unsatisfactory. Hopes that in the event of his death, the Governor will extend his patronage to his sons and settle the question of Jagirs and other affairs in their favour. Raja Dayaram Pandit (the Nawab's Secretary) will represent other particulars to Governor." This was the last letter that the Nawab was able to write to Warren Hastings, as, shortly afterwards, he breathed his last in Benares.

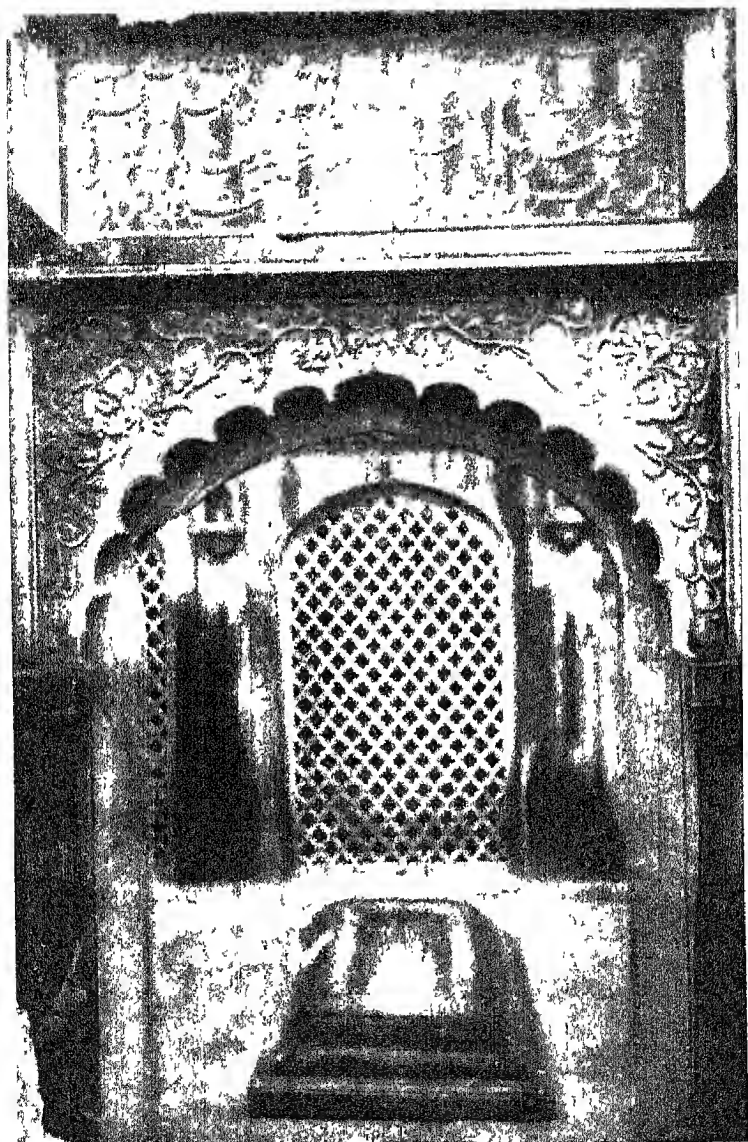
Ghulam Husain Khan in his *Seyer-ul-Mulakhirin*¹³ records: "Falling sick at the very time (relinquishing charge of the Governorship of Kora and Allahabad) he winged his flight towards eternity. His body was brought to Azimabad and buried in a Mausoleum, which he had prepared for himself. It was in a corner of Asadullah Khan's house, a palace which he had purchased. He was a great man unquestionably. May God have received him in the Mansion of Mercy." The Mausoleum where the Nawab is buried still

* 12. C. P. C., Vol. IV, letter 640.

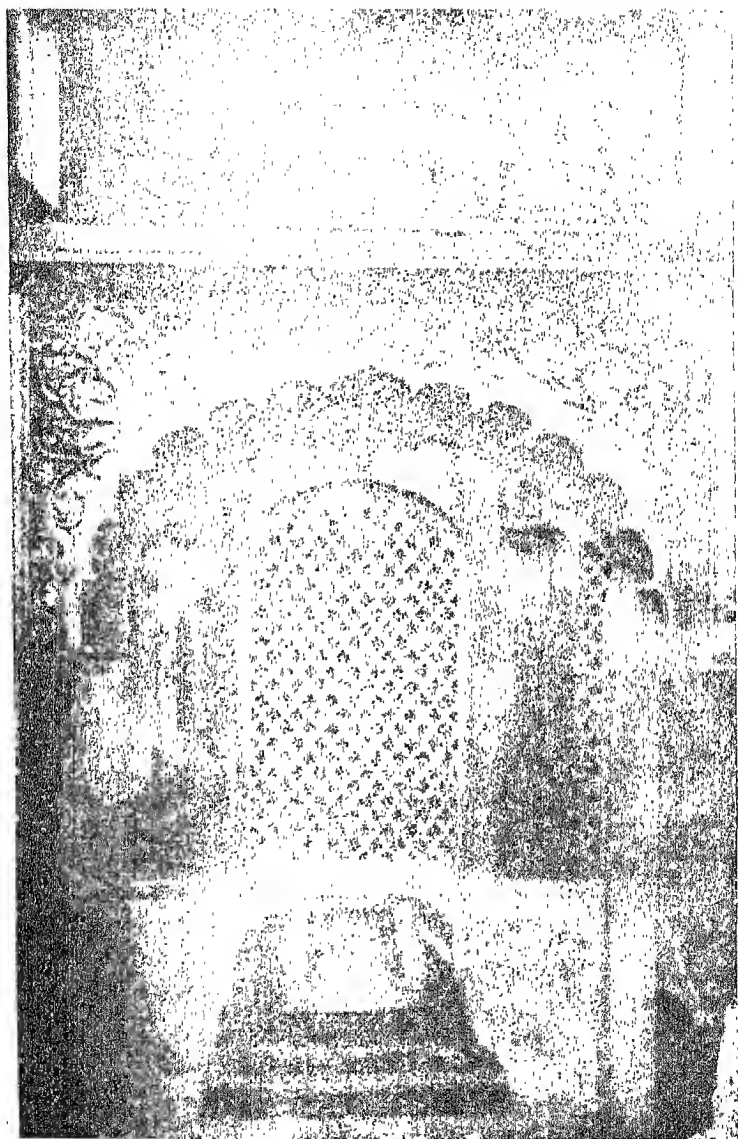
13. *Seyer-ul-Mutakhirin*, English Translation, Vol. II, p. 37.

exists and a photo of the tomb very kindly taken by Late Sir Courtney Terrell, Chief Justice of Bihar, in 1933, is reproduced in this book. Sir Courtney in his letter to my cousin Khan Bahadur Muhammad Ahsan Quli Khan, dated Patna the 22nd December 1933, describes the tomb in the following words: "The tomb is a beautiful piece of work but I am sorry to say that it is much neglected and the stone pillars at the corners are falling to pieces." In 1920, we approached the Government of Bihar with the request that the tomb may be declared a 'Protected monument' under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act; but as the present owners of the land, where the Nawab is buried, took objection and volunteered to look after the Mausoleum, the Government of Bihar, Education Department, Archaeological Branch, in its letter No. 6325, dated Patna the 11th October 1920, informed the Commissioner of the Patna Division as follows: "With reference to the correspondence resting with your letter No. G 266, dated the 20th January forwarding for information of Government papers regarding the action taken for declaration under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act tomb of Nawab Munir-ud-Dowla Riza Quli Khan Nadir Jung at Bauli in Patna City, I am directed to say that Government are satisfied that at present the tomb is properly cared for. But I am to request that you will be so good as to instruct the District Officer to keep himself acquainted with its condition in future so that, if necessary, protective action may be taken." It is needless to say that the Mausoleum is in a very neglected condition as personally testified by Sir Courtney Terrell. Will the Government of Bihar take action now?

Munir-ud-Dowla died on 10th November 1773, at Benares. He left five sons; (1) Munir-ud-Dowla II Khan-i-Zaman Khan Nawab Shuja Muhammad Shuja Quli Khan Bahadur Nadir Jung; (2) Farzand Khan Zia-ud-



NAWAB MUNIR-UD-DOWLAH'S TOMB



NAWAB MUNIR-UD-DOWLAH'S TOMB

Dowlah Mubariz-ul-Mulk Muqarrab-ul-Khaqani Nawab Karim Quli Khan Bahadur Tahawwur Jung; (3) Samsam-ud-Dowlah Rishadat Quli Khan Bahadur Haibat Jung; (4) Mubariz-ul-Mulk Amir-ud-Dowlah Khan Khanan Abbas Quli Khan Bahadur Nusrat Jung; and fifth and the last, Ali Quli Khan (died in infancy), and three daughters behind.

CHAPTER XVI

MUNIR-UD-DOWLAH'S ESTATE

The Parganas of Arwal, Biswak, Bhimpur, Shah-jahanpur and Bal in the Province of Bihar, and Khairagadh in the Province of Kora and Allahabad were granted as an *Al-Tumgha*¹ (a Jagir in perpetuity) to Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah by Shah Alam in recognition of his good services. During his life-time Munir-ud-Dowlah used to enjoy the income of these estates, but no sooner was his death reported than the East India Company placed his estate in the Province of Bihar under attachment, making it out to be only a life grant to Munir-ud-Dowlah, upon which the sons of Munir-ud-Dowlah led by their eldest brother Shuja Muhammad Khan, made a representation to Warren Hastings on the 23rd May 1774. And on the 24th May 1774 Warren Hastings recorded the following Minute as the President of the Council: "The President represents to the Board of Directors that the sons of the late Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah who are at present in Calcutta applied to him on three points in which he craves the assistance of the Government.

"The first respects a considerable sum of money which their father advanced to the King on the credit of his assignments on the Company in part of his stipend [it should be noted that the Royal Bengal tribute is converted into a 'stipend' by Warren Hastings.] The President has informed them that this administration having determined to suspend the payment of the King's Stipend, no assignment could be received upon it. That therefore the sum the late Nawab may have advanced must remain as a personal debt of the King himself, that if the final orders of the Company should

1. Original *Al-Tumgha* Firmans in possession of the author of which photographic copies are included in this book.



RAUSHAN-UL-MULK MOBARAK-UD-DOWLAH
NAWAB MOHAMMED MEHDI QULI KHAN
BAHADUR SHAUKAT JUNG
Grandson of Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah

determine that the arrears to the King should be paid up, then they may have an opportunity of receiving it from the fund, otherwise they must look to him only for payment.

“The second point regards the Jagir which their father held in the Province of Kora and Allahabad, the President has given them for answer that these Provinces being now ceded to the Vazier, the continuation of those Jagirs does not depend upon his Government, that they must apply to the Vazier for it, and he has promised to support their pretensions by his recommendation.

“ Their third claim is for the continuation of a Jagir which their father held in the Province of Bihar. The President submits their claim to the judgement and determination of the Board. He offers it as his opinion that although the laws of the Emperor do not convey an hereditary right to Jagir tenures, yet in consideration of the long connexion which subsisted between Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah and the Company, the peculiar circumstances of his death immediately succeeding the loss of his authority and government by the transfer of both to Nawab Shuja-ud-Dowlah, the claims which his family hold to the repayment of the advance above mentioned and the plea which they allege of heavy debts incurred by them since the old man's death (on the attachment of the Jagirs having no other means for their support), which they are unable to discharge, give them an undoubted right in equity to some consideration from the Company. Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah has left five sons, four of whom are in Calcutta, the fifth is yet an infant, the women and other relations of the deceased Nawab are, I am informed, very numerous and their expenses very great.

“ The President begs leave to observe that a reference of this plea to the Honourable Court of Directors would have the effect of an absolute refusal since the family have no other

visible means of present subsistence nor any dependence on which they could build their hopes of their immediate provision. It is possible, and will be commonly presumed, that the deceased Nawab left great wealth accumulated by the profits of his government of Kora and Allahabad. To this opinion may be opposed the advances which he did make, whatever was the amount, to the King on account of his tribute; his expenses which were lavish; to these may be added the style of living, which his sons have been accustomed since their infancy with their father and from the stations which they have occupied in attending on him, on the King or on the Vazier. It will rest with the Board to determine this point. The President has always given the brothers such hopes as depend on him in a case wherein he could only speak his own inclination independent of the determination of Government; nor should he have even proceeded so far, but from a motive of compassion excited by strong natural symptoms of distress and affliction in the elder son of Munir-ud-Dowlah, a youth of little apparent art or design in the form of representation which he made to the President on the subject. For the particulars he refers to their representation on the subject which he now lays before the Board."

It was therefore resolved by the Court of Directors that "the Jagir of the late Munir-ud-Dowlah be allowed to continue in the possession of Khan-i-Zaman Khan (Shuja Muhammad Khan Munir-ud-Dowlah II), the elder son of the family, as a 'present' for the subsistence of himself and his father's family from year to year until the pleasure of the Court of Directors should be known". Warren Hastings also in reply to the King's Shuqqa wrote² to Shah Alam on the 27th May 1774 as follows: "Has received the Royal Shuqqa expressing sorrow at the death of Munir ud-Dowlah and stating that His



NAWAB HASAN QULI KHAN BAHADUR
SOHRAB JUNG
Great-grandson of Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah

Majesty was graciously pleased to confer the title of Munir-ud-Dowlah Bahadur Nadir Jung on Muhammad Shuja Khan, the eldest son of the late Nawab. Says that Muhammad Shuja Khan accompanied by his brothers, came to Calcutta to visit him. As a consideration of the loyal services rendered to the Company by the late Nawab, continued his Jagir at Bihar to his family."

However, a dispute arose between the brothers about the distribution of the estate and as the Company had evinced a doubt as regards the Jagir being an *Al-Tumgha*, i. e. a grant in perpetuity, Nawab Abbas Quli Khan, the younger brother of Munir-ud-Dowlah II, appealed to Shah Alam, on which the King was pleased to write³ after the usual greetings to Warren Hastings in May 1775, which was received by him on the 31st May 1775, that "in consideration of the good services rendered by the late Munir-ud-Dowlah Bahadur, we had conferred on him an *Al-Tumgha*. Now when the aforesaid Bahadur is removed from this transitory world, the *Al-Tumgha* is conferred on his sons and widows, and that you have also given letter of release to that effect. Now some of the sons and widows of the late Munir-ud-Dowlah Bahadur have represented to us that Muhammad Shuja Khan alone is in possession of the *Al-Tumgha* Mahal and he says that you, the strength of the Empire, in your letter of the release have given possession to him alone and that the share from the *Al-Tumgha* does not extend to other sons, etc. Now, as the maintenance of all the sons and the widows of the late Nawab is the sublime desire of His Majesty, therefore, it is incumbent on you, our loyal servant, to write letters to the Mutsaddis of Azimabad that

3. C. P. C., Vol. IV, letter 1809. Print-photo of Shah Alam's letter to Warren Hastings as supplied by the Imperial Record Department, No. 561, dated 2nd December 1932, is reproduced in this book.

the income from the *Al-Tumgha* should be distributed to all the sons and widows of the late Nawab, etc. etc."

The above quoted letter from the Emperor knocks the bottom completely out of the plea put up by the East India Company that the grant made to the Nawab was a Jagir (life grant) only and not an *Al-Tumgha*. Besides, Warren Hastings was himself aware that the Firman granting the *Al-Tumgha* was in possession of Munir-ud-Dowlah II as he had himself promised to procure for him a Sanad from the Supreme Council for the same as appears from a letter⁴ written to him by Munir-ud-Dowlah II on the 23rd April 1780: "The Governor-General promised to secure for him a Sanad from the Supreme Council for the *Al-Tumgha* grant which he had received from His Majesty. Has been anxiously waiting for the same" And yet when this very Firman was produced by Nawab Abbas Quli Khan after the death of Munir-ud-Dowlah II in 1800, Mr W. Leycester, the then Collector of Bihar, in his letter⁵ to the Board of Directors dated the 12th February 1800, pronounced it as a forgery, and remarked: "The Board are aware that there exist claims in the family to hold the estate; I have called a Jagir as an *Al-Tumgha* and on the death of Shuja Muhammad Khan (whose death was being reported) an *Al-Tumgha* Sanad was found among his papers, and which was shown to me by Nawab Abbas Quli Khan, the youngest brother. There is a great reason, however, to support the suspicion that this Sanad is a forgery as Shuja Muhammad Khan never produced it in his life time and it might, I imagine, have been easily inserted among his papers at the time of his death." The Firmans are in possession of the

4. C. P. C., Vol. V, letter 1842.

5. Records from the Bihar Collectorate and the letter from the Diwany Adaulat Zilla.



NAWAB RIZA QULI KHAN BAHADUR FIROZ JUNG
Great-grandson of Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah



NAWAB RIZA QULI KHAN BAHADUR FIROZ JUNG
Great-grandson of Nawab Miran-ul-Dowlat

author and their photographic copies are reproduced in this book. However, on the assumption that the estate was a Jagir, not many years after the death of the Nawab, the whole estate was taken possession of by the Company and his descendants granted political stipends, but on every occasion of renewal of this allowance, the right of Government to resume on lapses was distinctly reserved. Not getting any justice from the Company, the descendants of the late Nawab decided to test the validity of their claims in the Court of Law. Sakina Begum (a daughter of Munir-ud-Dowlah), filed a suit in the Court of A. Foulton Esquire, Judge of Diwany Adaulat Zilla Bihar, in 1800. A decree was passed confirming the Jagir to be an *Al-Tumgha*, in the same year, on which an appeal was filed to the Suddar Diwany Adaulat by the Collector of Bihar under the orders of the Board of Revenue, praying that the decree passed might be set aside as "null and void" because the plaint was received and tried without the previous consent of the Governor-General in Council under Section 2, Regulation 3 of 1793, with the result that the decree was set aside on the 17th September 1800. The descendants of the Nawab, however, did not rest satisfied with the decision of the Government and Nawab Sohrab Jung Bahadur, a great grandson of Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah, made an appeal to the Bengal Government through his agent Mr W. Taylor to hold the Jagir of Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah has an *Al-Tumgha* grant; but this appeal also did not succeed, as the Bengal Board of Revenue refused to accept the grant to Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah as anything but a Jagir which "was subsequently released only on personal grounds for the subsistence of the Nawab's family from year to year until the pleasure of the Court of Directors should be known". And yet all this time the Government had in their Imperial Archives the letter written by Shah Alam, to

Warren Hastings after the death of Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah confirming the *Al-Tumgha* on his sons.

Again in 1922 all the descendants of Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah, headed by my father Nawab Ahmad Quli Khan and my uncle Nawab Amir Husain Khan, submitted a Memorial to the Government of India through the Government of Bihar praying for the restoration of the *Al-Tumgha* Jagir in Bihar of Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah. The Memorial was withheld by the Bihar Government under the discretionary powers vested in the Local Government by Rule 11 (4) of the Memorial Rules. A true copy of the communication is herewith reproduced:

Memo No. 2414 P

Government of Bihar and Orissa,

Political Department.

Political Branch.

To

The Commissioner of the Patna Division.

Patna, the 18th March 1922.

Reference:—Letter No. G 265, dated the 23rd January 1922 from the Commissioner of the Patna Division.

Subject:—*Memorial addressed to His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India by the members of the Bhiknapahari family of Patna praying for the restoration of the property of Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah, or in the alternative for fresh grant of equal value from the Khas Mahals of Government in Bihar and Orissa.*

The Memorial has been withheld under the discretionary powers vested in the Local Government by Rule 11 (4) of the

Memorial Rules, an extract from which is enclosed. Apart altogether from the practical difficulties of restoring the former property of the late Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah or the granting of an equivalent Jagir, the Governor-in-Council could not agree to endow from the public revenues all the descendants of the Nawab in return for his assistance to the East India Company nearly 160 years ago. Government, as the Memorialists recognise, have shown special sympathy to this family in the matter of appointment to the public service and will continue to regard the fortunes of the family with interest but cannot recognise any obligations to maintain all its indigent members. In the opinion of His Excellency-in-Council the obligation of the East India Company to the late Nawab has been fully discharged.

2. The Memorialists may be informed accordingly.

By order.....&c.

Sd. J. C. Shearer.

Under-Secretary to Government.

The last sentence in the communication is extremely characteristic. It was never our prayer to the Government to discharge the obligations to the East India Company of the late Nawab, but we approached the Government appealing to them to restore to us the *Al-Tumgha* granted to Munir-ud-Dowlah in the Province of Bihar by Shah Alam which was deceitfully attached by the Board of Directors after the Nawab's death.

It passes one's comprehension to be told that a man of Munir-ud-Dowlah's abilities and foresight, who at one time exercised the greatest influence in the Court of Shah Alam, and who wielded the powers of the Prime Minister, should have been so careless of his own affairs that he would only obtain a Jagir, i. e. a Life Tenure for himself; while he was obtaining *Al-Tumgha* Sanads for all and sundry from Shah

Alam, and by making no provision for his children leave them destitute after his death. The only explanation for the way in which Warren Hastings treated him, firstly, by selling the Provinces of Kora and Allahabad to Shuja-ud-Dowlah and thus depriving him of his governorship of the above Provinces, secondly, by not repaying about twenty lakhs of rupees which he had advanced to Shah Alam in lieu of the Bengal tribute, and thirdly, by attaching, on his death, his estate and making it out to be only a life grant and thus depriving his descendants of the only means of subsistence, is, in the words⁶ of Moulvi Khairuddin Husain, the author of *Alam Ashob*, that, "The Governor (Warren Hastings) on account of the machinations of his enemies was not favourably inclined towards Nawab Munir-ud-Dowlah and bore a grudge against him." Or, was it in conformity with the general trend of the East India Company's policy so eloquently revealed by Edmund Burke in 1783 while speaking on Fox's India Bill in the House of Commons: "First, I say that there is not a single Prince, State or Potentate in India, great or small, whom they have not sold; secondly, not a single treaty which they have not broken; thirdly, not a single Prince or State, whosoever put any trust in the Company, who is not utterly ruined."

6. *Alam Ashob*, By Khairuddin Husain, Mss. Vol. III, p. 47 (family collection).



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DOCUMENT ISSUED BY THE VAZIER'S COURT
confirming the Altamgha grant of the Pargannahs

Handwritten signature or mark at the bottom left corner.

Four circular stamps or seals arranged horizontally at the bottom center.

Main body of handwritten text in Urdu script, written diagonally across the page.

Handwritten text on the right side, including a signature and a date: "27th October 1900".

Handwritten text at the top of the page, including a signature and a date: "1900".

عظیم آباد بحصور ساطع النور بغوستند کہ حاصل
 وزندان و بیوہ برسد باقی ما بدولت و اقبال
 احوال خیریت اشتغال خود دانند

True Copy

[Signature]

Record Dept. }
 and December 1932 } Keeper of the Records of the
 Government of India

UMENT CONFIRMING THE ALTAMGHA
 GRANT TO MUNIR-UD-DOWLAH

e Pargannahs of Arwal, Biswak, Shahjehanpur
 and Bal in the Province of Bihar



در وقت صبح نماز پیش از آنکه در آنجا حاضر شود



کوسلہ، جہلم، گزنی، کراچی، لاہور، ملتان، راولپنڈی، سکس، سیالکوٹ، سوات، خیبر پختونخوا، خیبر، یو ایف سی

[illegible]

فیہ کہتے ہیں کہ اگر کوئی شخص اس کی خدمت میں پہنچے تو اس کو جو چیز چاہے اس پر عطا فرمائیں۔

سکونہ برصغیر میں ایک ایک کا نام لکھا ہوا ہے اور ان کے ناموں کے ساتھ ان کے کھانے کی چیزیں بھی لکھی ہیں۔



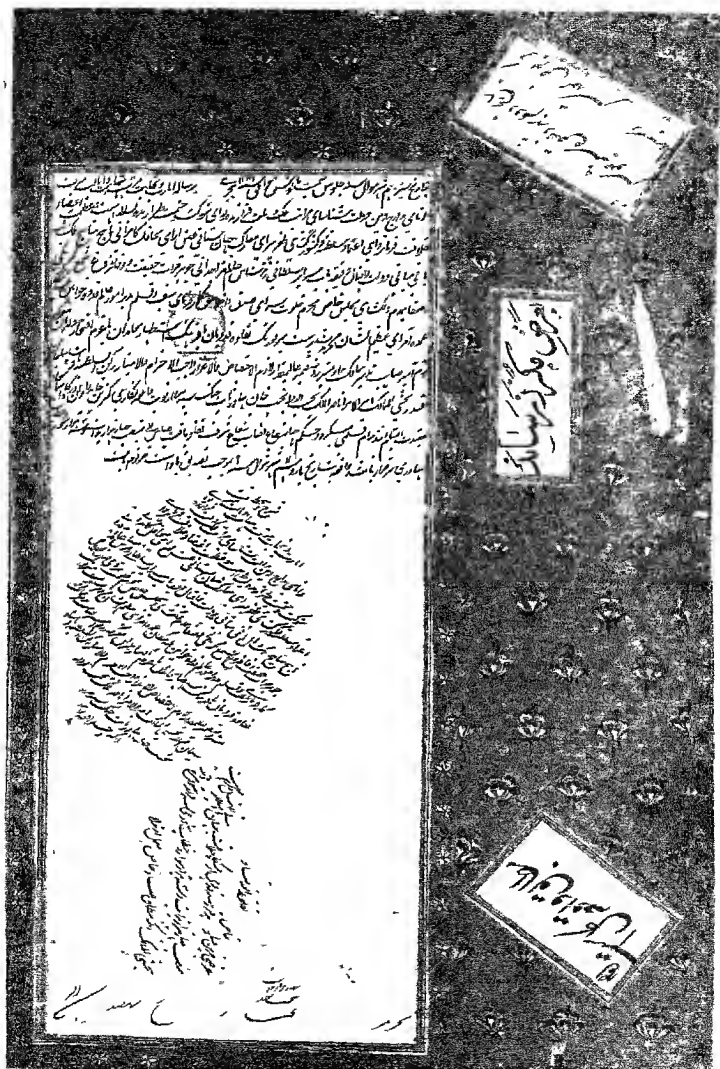
حضرت مولانا محمد رفیع صاحب مدظلہ العالی

طراز و زیبای است و طاعت فرارنده را بگنج خشت نبرد علم و طهارت و پاکیزگی و در

سبح سعت هاراد پیکر که از نفع آن نیک ارادینان باشد ایام خوشی را بفرستد
 علی بن ابی طالب

در خصوص این دانست، و ان شاء که خود ستم ناست، بهادر پس از اتمام جنگ با درویش خوار گشت و اسیر شد.





PATENT OF APPOINTMENT

from Emperor Shah Alam II conferring on Nawab Mobarizul-Mulk Amir-ud-Dowlah Khan Khanan Abbas Quli Khan Bahadur the third son of Munir-ud-Dowlah the title of 'Bahaduri' and a 'Mansab' of four thousand personal and three thousand horse, dated the 9th year of reign corresponding with the 11th Shavval 1181 A. H

RETROSPECT

Munir-ud-Dowlah had a remarkable career in India. One thing which stands out above all as a great trait of his character is the role of successful Ambassadorships which he filled both in Iran and in India. And, secondly, from the time of his arrival at the Court of Emperor Muhammad Shah II as an Ambassador on behalf of Nadir Shah and from the foregoing account of his career in this country, another phase of his character which stands out most clearly is that the Moghul Emperors, under whom he served, possessed in him a most loyal and a staunch friend. Self-aggrandizement was never his vice. He worked with heart and soul and unceasingly for the restoration of the Moghul power in India. As soon as he came in contact with the English and found in them an organized and a disciplined race, able, strong and ambitious, he made no delay in bringing about a friendly understanding between them and the Emperor Shah Alam; because he discerned at that moment that if any Power was able to restore to the Moghuls their pristine glory it would be the English. His innumerable letters to Lord Clive and other Governors published by the Government of India in the Calendar of Persian Correspondence bear out the fact that he was untiring in his zeal and unflinching in his attempts to persuade the English to help Shah Alam to recover the throne of his ancestors and to bring solidarity in the hitherto disrupted and disorganized body politic of India. It was only when the English went back on the treaty entered into with the Emperor Shah Alam after the Battle of Buxer in 1764, by which the dominions of Shuja-ud-Dowlah were made over to the Emperor, and that at Chhapra in 1765 they

came to a different understanding and restored to Shuja-ud-Dowlah all his dominions, that the Nawab became a bit suspicious of the *bona fides* of the English. They were playing a different game altogether. Their aim was to create a second Bengal in Oudh, which they eventually did succeed in creating, inasmuch as by the treaty of 1765, Shuja-ud-Dowlah became more or less a subservient dependent on them like the Nazims of Bengal.

An opportunity was, however, opened out to Munir-ud-Dowlah to bring another ally to the aid of the Emperor which he found in the person of Ahmad Shah Abdali, King of Afghanistan. Ahmad Shah Abdali and Munir-ud-Dowlah were friends of long standing, both having served under Nadir. It was the result of Munir-ud-Dowlah's embassy to Ahmad Shah Abdali when he had come to India in 1761 that, after the Battle of Panipat, Ahmad Shah Abdali commended all the Nobles of Hindustan to recognize Shah Alam as the rightful King after Alamgir II. Had it not been for this, it is very doubtful whether Shah Alam would ever have been proclaimed the Emperor of Hindustan. However, he had again come to India in 1767, at the invitation of Nawab Mir Qasim, the ex-Nazim of Bengal, to help him to regain the Nizamat and also to punish the recalcitrant Sikhs. But reading between the lines, one is inclined to believe that he had also every desire to help Shah Alam to regain his position. From the numerous letters written by Munir-ud-Dowlah to the Governor on the subject of Ahmad Shah Abdali's visit to India at that time, it is clear that the Nawab was very much desirous of forming an alliance with Ahmad Shah Abdali on behalf of Emperor Shah Alam. Whatever the outward motive he may have betrayed, the real move underlying the whole policy was to procure for the Emperor a strong and powerful ally in the north. He, however, could not succeed in his attempts as both the English and Shuja-ud-

Dowlah were averse to having any dealings with Ahmad Shah Abdali. Munir-ud-Dowlah was not even allowed by the English to go and meet Ahmad Shah Abdali although very much pressed by Najib-ud-Dowlah and desired by the Emperor himself. Had the alliance proposed by Munir-ud-Dowlah succeeded, who knows that it may not have turned the trend of the whole subsequent history of the land? Munir-ud-Dowlah was very much against the Emperor making an alliance with the Marathas as he knew that no reliance could be put on their promises and that their real aim was to subjugate the whole of Hindustan. When some unscrupulous Ministers of the Court formed a clique and tried to throw Shah Alam, who had become disgusted with his confinement in Allahabad, into the arms of the Marathas, the Nawab practically risked his life in trying to frustrate the Court intrigues by advising Shah Alam against the disastrous policy of joining the Marathas. Finding the Emperor completely in the hands of the intriguers, he left the Court in disgust and retired to Calcutta in 1769. He remained there for a year and had made up his mind to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy places when the English due to the gatherings of ugly clouds in the north which threatened the union between the Emperor, the Vazier and the Company, again persuaded the Nawab to return to the Court, much against his will. After his arrival in Court in the latter part of 1770, he persuaded the Emperor to postpone his expedition to Delhi and in the meantime suggested to the English and the Vazier to come to the help of the Emperor by making an alliance with the Rohillas and with the combined army consisting of the Emperor's, the English, the Vazier's and the Rohillas', march to Delhi in order to oust the Marathas who were then occupying the Capital. The Nawab's aim was to break the rising tide of the Maratha ambitions through a league with the English, the Vazier and the Rohillas and by that means bring solidarity to the Rule

of Shah Alam. The dilatory policy of the English and the jealousy which the Vazier entertained for the Rohilla Chiefs and the ambition that he had to annex their territories to his own, came in the way of the plans formulated by the Nawab in conjunction with General Barkar and the Vazier at Benares in 1771, with the result that Shah Alam left Allahabad in April of the same year and threw himself into the arms of the Marathas, a step which once for all destroyed the whole fabric of the Moghul Empire in India.

Before his departure Shah Alam appointed Munir-ud-Dowlah to the administration of the Provinces of Kora and Allahabad, much against the Nawab's inclination. He carried on the administration most successfully for about two years, when he had to make it over to Shuja-ud-Dowlah on account of the intrigues of Warren Hastings who sold the Provinces to the Vazier in September 1773 for the consideration of Rupees Fifty lakhs, very much against the wishes and directions of the Board of Directors. The loss of his power was a severe blow to the Nawab who died broken-hearted in Benares in November of the same year. India lost in him a great Nobleman of high culture and profound learning¹ and the Moghuls an astute statesman, an able administrator, a great diplomat, a loyal and a true friend. He was a kind and a just master and a loving father. May his soul rest in peace!

1. His small *Brochure* entitled *Forty-one Admonitions from Munir-ud-Dowlah* in Persian versel compiled by himself and written in his own hand, which is preserved in the family, shows his attainment in the art of Calligraphy and the high order of learning that he possessed.

GENEALOGICAL TREE

